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CLASSROOM TEACHING AND LEARNING AS A COMPLEX INTERACTIONAL GAME.
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THIS WAS AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF INTERPERSONAL INTERACTIONS THROUGH WHICH TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCEED IN INNER CITY SUBURBAN, AND RURAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASSROOMS. A MAJOR OBJECTIVE OF THE WORK WAS TO IDENTIFY SOME CRITICAL DIMENSIONS OF DIFFERENCE AMONG THESE THREE KINDS OF SETTINGS FOR MORE SYSTEMATIC ATTENTION LATER. TWO OBSERVERS VISITED EACH OF SIX CLASSROOMS ONCE WEEKLY FOR A 2-HOUR PERIOD. THEY OBSERVED SEPARATELY, AND AN EFFORT WAS MADE TO CONCLUDE EACH PART OF THE SCHOOL DAY AND EACH REGULAR CLASS PROGRAM OR ACTIVITY. THE OBSERVERS TOOK VOTES IF THE SITUATION ALLOWED IT. THE CONCLUSIONS INDICATED THAT THE CLASSROOM CAN BE AND SOMETIMES IS A NEGATIVE, PERHAPS DAMAGING ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN. IT IS IMPORTANT TO EMPHASIZE THAT EACH CLASSROOM TEACHER OBSERVED WAS DOING THE BEST JOB HE OR SHE KNEW HOW TO DO. THEIR FAILURES REFLECT PARTICULAR PERSONALITIES AND VALUE ORIENTATIONS AND DEFICITS OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL RATHER THAN WILLFULLY NEGATIVE OR APATHETIC BEHAVIOR. OBSERVATIONS FOLLOWED BY GROUP OR ONE-TO-ONE DISCUSSIONS SHOULD BE EXPLORED AS A MEANS FOR ENHANCING TEACHER INSIGHT AND EFFECTIVENESS. (JL)

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CLASSROOM TEACHING AND LEARNING AS A COMPLEX INTERACTIONAL GAME

Cooperative Research Project No. S-191

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I. PROBLEM:

We know that there tend to be systematic differences between pupils attending suburban, predominantly middle-class schools and those attending inner-city schools serving mostly working-class youngsters. Achievement test scores, for example, generally favor the former group. The extent to which this reflects differences in the schools, however, is less clear. Informal observation suggests that public schools may have systematically different goals for different pupil populations that reflect institutional inertia and convenience rather than educational needs. If this is so, then lower-class, inner-city classrooms, middle-class, suburban classrooms, and rural classrooms may be essentially different worlds as teacher-pupil interactions generate varying atmospheres and expectations. In broad terms, this is the problem with which the exploratory work reported here was concerned.

The complexities of teaching are viewed as functions not only of the information to be transmitted to pupils, but also of the varying interpersonal transactions and relationships which mediate the communication process. Although it is recognized that pupils and teachers exert reciprocal socializing pressures and constraints on each other, this study focused on the teacher as the institutionalized, primary initiator of goals and rules or, "definer of the game," subject to distortions and redefinitions by pupils. More explicitly, the teacher determines and communicates what is considered important (e.g., passing tests or listening quietly in class; achievement or behavior), and what is a serious violation. From this, pupils are socialized into some sort of pupil role, or "learn how to be pupils." Teachers may, in part, "learn how to be teachers" from the responses, general behavior, and implicit rules of their pupils.

This study was an attempt to deepen our knowledge of classroom settings and to begin to identify systematic differences between schools that may reflect pressure (or lack of pressure) from the immediate community or school traditions rather than reflecting the needs of their constituencies or society. This entails concern with such questions as the following. What types of behavior tend to be characteristic of suburban schools in contrast to inner-city and rural school settings? To what extent do these schools simply mirror their socio-cultural and physical environments, to what extent do they attempt to impose immutable expectations irrespective of the human environment, and to what extent do they help to harmonize the local realities with the needs of the broader society? Does teacher behavior "cut through" the complex social structure or ride along the surface? How do teachers develop and conceptualize such objectives and expectations as, for example, "What the children in this school need is control and socialization?" How are such expectations implemented, if at all, and how are they defined by the various participants? How is pupil performance evaluated by the pupils themselves and by their teachers and others? What is the relative emphasis on learning and on classroom behavior, on effective long-range educational programming and on surviving one day at a time?

These are some of the questions that seemed important as we attempted to begin to define systematically the social rules and patterns of interaction in each setting. There are, of course, basic similarities among even the most diverse of our public schools. Children are, at least nominally, there to "learn," and teachers, to "teach." Our primary concern, however, was with the differences which may implicitly subvert attempts to provide equal educational opportunities for all. The current effort was designed to explore how a complex interpersonal structure like a school can be analyzed and broken down into its essential components. Of course, the small contract permitted only preliminary exploration of the potential of this approach. It is hoped that the project will provide the basis for additional work leading toward the development of a model for such analysis and subsequent conclusions and recommendations for practice.

II. OBJECTIVES:

This was an exploratory study of the interpersonal interactions through which teaching and learning proceed in inner-city, suburban, and rural elementary school classrooms. A major objective of the work was to identify some critical dimensions of difference among these three kinds of settings for more systematic attention later. It is hoped that this will ultimately lead to: (1) the development of a generic schema for the study of and communication about classroom interaction and teaching behavior; (2) a deeper understanding of the assets and deficits that tend to characterize the educational process in various kinds of schools; and (3) the development of directional guidelines and effective strategies for constructive change.

A general schema, broadly applicable to a variety of classrooms serving a variety of kinds of pupils, would provide conceptual tools for research on such fundamental current problems as academic "under-achievement," the motivation and education of culturally disadvantaged pupils who are, increasingly, being transferred to "middle-class" schools in many urban areas. The problems of the schools in these fields are more than academic, subject-matter problems. They involve the basic role of the school in our society as a particular kind of socializing agent and represent areas of school failure or, in the last-mentioned case, as yet unmet challenge.

Specific objectives for the current effort, then, can be presented as follows:

1- To examine pupil and teacher behavior and the educational process in an inner-city school, a suburban school, and a rural school;

2- To identify systematic differences in behavior and climate among the three settings, if such differences exist; and

3- To develop hypotheses about the generalizability and impact of observed differences for more systematic study.

The original proposal stated other, more long range objectives that would probably not be attainable within the scope of this relatively modest first attempt. Among these goals awaiting subsequent attention are the development of change models, the comparison of class room interaction patterns with those of the family and peer group and, of course, the development and validation of a schema broadly applicable beyond the limited number of settings studied so far. The "game" model was not applied as explicitly as was suggested in the original proposal because it seemed premature; the first task was to obtain a broad picture of the settings involved. Analysis in terms of games, rules, and the like does seem promising, however, and is contemplated as the work moves toward more systematic efforts to generalize about the three (or more) kinds of settings and to make comparisons among them. In summary, the objectives of the project reported here were to open this area of inquiry, to evaluate its potential as a fruitful focus of concern, and to lay the groundwork for contemplated next steps.

III. RELATED RESEARCH

As behavioral scientists have become increasingly involved in research related to the impact of formal education on the development of young people, the need for more systematic theoretical perspectives as a basis for research has become apparent. One such requisite of effective research is a systematic, valid conceptualization of human interaction in the school situation in terms of its meanings to its participants. Efforts have been made to study school situations using such methods as multi-factor, self-report inventories (e.g., Stern, 1962), sociometry (e.g., Gronlund, 1959), and structured, systematic observation (e.g., Kounin, 1962; see also Biddle and Ellena, 1964, Medley and Mitzel, 1963, and Withall and Lewis, 1963). Faced with the need to develop hypotheses and to isolate critical interactional dimensions, however, several major investigators (e.g., Barker and Gump, 1964; Kimball, 1963; Henry, 1963) have found adaptations of participant observation or of the natural history method used in anthropology to be especially productive. Similar methods have been applied in non-school settings as well. Goffman (1961a), Caudill (1958), and Polsky (1962) report participant observational studies in "total institutions"--mental hospitals and correctional settings. Becker and his colleagues (1961) have used participant observation as the basic method in their study of student culture in medical school. Methodologically, the current proposal draws heavily on this tradition. The rationale and procedures of participant observation are detailed by Becker and Geer (1960) and by Bruyn (1963).

In subsequent phases of the work, it is expected that Psychological Ecology (Barker and Gump, 1964) and the Critical Incident Technique (Flanagan, 1954) will be most helpful. The ecological study of the impact of high school size on student behavior reported by Barker and Gump (1964) seems particularly relevant as a prototype for the next phase of the current work comparing different kinds of schools. The Critical Incident Technique should help in the systematization of both observational material and incidents reported by various participants (Goodrich and Boomer, 1958).

As anticipated in the original proposal, there was not the time to apply measures of developmental status and change (e.g., Hunt and Dopyera, 1964), nor was the project ready to move into that advanced phase. The work of Hunt and Dopyera (1966) did, however, provide a ~~dergee~~ degree of support for the reported heterogeneity of the Downtown School sixth graders in terms of developmental status.

IV. PROCEDURE:

A. General Design:

It was originally planned to use the natural history method of participant observation to study classrooms and the impact of teacher and pupil behavior as a complex interactional "game" involving objectives, rules, and strategies. This approach to the study of interpersonal transactions has been applied to other kinds of situations, such as institutional life, community life, and psychotherapy, with apparently productive results. As work began, it became evident that an immediate attempt to apply a "game" model to the classrooms studied would be premature. It seemed more appropriate and prudent to hold that for a later phase and to focus on the intuitive analysis of observers' recordings, in view of the need for theory-building and the development of specific hypotheses. The complexities encountered led also to the gathering of other kinds of data designed to broaden and clarify the picture, as is detailed below.

B. Population and Sample:

As was planned, the population studied included one first grade and one sixth-grade class from each of three types of schools: an inner-city, slum-neighborhood school; a suburban school serving middle-class youngsters; and a rural school in a seemingly relatively deprived area.

Permission to conduct the study in the first two schools was obtained from the school administration in a medium-sized city, and a rural school district about thirty miles to the north also agreed to participate. The specific schools chosen were suggested by the school officials in accordance with the broad criteria just stated. The investigators then visited the schools to make sure that they met the criteria and to solicit cooperation from the principals and teachers involved. In each case, the school originally suggested turned out to be appropriate and willing to host the study. All concerned were, of course, assured that their participation would be anonymous.

Selection of specific classes for study was simplified by the fact that two of the schools had only one class in the grades to be studied-first and sixth. In the suburban sixth grade, one of the two sixth grade classes had a male teacher and was chosen because the inner-city sixth grade was also taught by a man. (All other available classes were taught by women.) On the first grade level, the teacher chosen was the one whom the principal felt would be less ~~least~~ bothered by the presence of the observers. It had been agreed in advance that no new teachers would be selected, and the teachers all turned out to have had between five and thirteen years of experience. The classes thus chosen were not necessarily representative, of course, but this exploratory work did not require nor purport to study other than selected classrooms in each of the three kinds of settings. Generalization will be one of the functions of later work.

The observers met with the principals and the teachers of each school several times to explain the project and conditions, answer their questions, and attempt to gain their confidence. It was emphasized that participation was voluntary, and all the teachers who had been nominated agreed to be included. The observers next visited the classrooms to explain the project and their presence to the children. Only after this final step was completed did the actual observations begin.

The "sample" is viewed as the sample of behavior obtained during the ten weeks from mid-September through November, when each of the two observers visited each of the six classrooms once weekly for a two-hour period. They observed separately, and an effort was made to include each part of the school day and each regular class program or activity. Early visits were scheduled with the teachers; later, when the teachers concurred, visits were made without advance notice. The observers took notes if the situation allowed it. The teachers did not object to this procedure. Some teachers needed occasional conferences with the observers for reassurance, and these were arranged. The cues came from the teachers themselves or from their colleagues or principals. As soon after the observation period as possible, the observers recorded their observations on tape for later transcription. They attempted to record as much as possible of what they had seen, the stream of behavior, as objectively as they could. In addition, they included the more subjective and intuitive responses separate from the main text in the form of notes. Some sample sets of field notes are presented in Appendix A.

C. Data and Instrumentation:

The typed recordings were corrected by the observers, who added further comments to clarify and expand on the material. The records were then divided into incidents which were typed on cards and inductively classified into tentative categories. Study of this material during and after the observations suggested that a clearer picture of the several sets of goals operating in each of the schools was needed. Thus, instead of returning to the classrooms for additional observation (as had been contemplated), the observers turned their attention to the implicit objectives of the three schools as might be reflected in the field notes. Drawing on the notes, they prepared descriptions of a hypothetical "ideal pupil" in each of the classrooms.

It was anticipated that this might shed new light on the apparently contrasting goals of each setting. One result of this exercise was to confirm the investigators' hunch that little differentiating evidence was visible in the first grade data. Therefore, the decision was made to defer further consideration of these classes and to concentrate on the sixth grades.

It was decided that there would be value also in comparing the "ideal pupil" conceptions of the teachers and pupils in each class ~~as well~~. Permission was obtained to administer five short essay questions to each of the sixth grade classes. The following questions were included:

1. What kind of a student is he or she? How does he act?
2. If he learns well, tell me what he does in the classroom that helps him do this.
3. Is he liked by most other students? If so, why? If not, why?
4. Do you think he was this way when school started this year, or has he improved as the year has gone along? Explain.
5. How many students in this class are like the student you are describing, if any?

These questions seemed likely to elicit the kinds of information sought about the children's perceptions of their classroom and the directions in which it was moving or attempting to move. The three teachers were asked to respond to similar questions.

The questions were submitted to the children in mimeographed form, with several inches of blank space for them to respond in writing after each. The observer instructed them as follows: "I want you to answer these questions thinking about a perfect student in this class. If there is someone who fits your image or idea of this person, think of him or her, but do not use names. If no one in the class fits your idea of a perfect student, make one up. I want you to think of the kind of student who would be best in this class." The specific items were also read to the classes as they worked on them, and pupils' questions about the items were answered with pre-planned, standard clarifying explanations insofar as possible. The pupils seemed interested in the task, particularly so in the suburban school, where they asked direct questions about it. The questionnaires were completed anonymously, but the children were asked a few weeks later to add their names and did so on a voluntary basis. This change-an afterthought-was made so that the investigators could correlate responses with such other factors as intelligence if this seemed likely to be helpful.

Finally, background data were obtained for all children for whom it was available. This included age, intelligence and achievement test scores, and parents' education and occupation. It was learned that the two classes of sixth graders at the suburban school had been grouped largely by ability, so background data for both classes were included. This seemed important to permit an assessment of the overall suburban pupil population as well as the particularly high-achieving class which happened to be the one studied. Thus, the data gathered included the observers' field recordings, "ideal pupil" descriptions by observers, teachers, and pupils, and the background information just mentioned. Time did not permit the inclusion of interviews with parents and others as had originally been contemplated.

V. ANALYSIS:

The observational data have been divided into individual "incidents" with the two observers working independently and comparing their results. The incidents include: child behavior episodes, child-child interactions, teacher-child interactions, and group behavior episodes. There was generally close agreement, and exceptions were discussed until agreement was reached. The incidents were typed individually on cards and classified according to tentative categories. These have been used descriptively and to formulate hypothetical generalizations, as was described in the original proposal, and an attempt will be made to analyze them more systematically in a later phase of the work. In addition, the field notes were used on a continuing basis during the period of observation to pinpoint areas that seemed to need closer attention.

No formal analysis was attempted on the "ideal pupil" essays written by the observers - their primary function was to illuminate the potential usefulness of the descriptions subsequently collected from the pupils and the teachers. Because only one teacher representing each of the three schools was involved, their descriptions were also used only impressionistically. The children's "ideal pupil" responses, on the other hand, were amenable both to content comparisons and to such analyses as word counts, error ratios, idea counts, and size of words used. These results are presented later, and sample responses to the first three questions appear in

Appendix B.

Medians and inter-quartile ranges were computed for background data, including age, intelligence and achievement scores, and parental education and occupation. It had been hoped to compare the ideal pupil descriptions by children from different schools controlling for such factors as intelligence and achievement, but the overlap between the suburban class and either of the others was too slight to make such comparisons meaningful. Unfortunately, ideal pupil descriptions were not available for the less-talented sixth grade class in the suburban school, which could have been used for this purpose.

IV. RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS, and IMPLICATIONS:

As stated in the original proposal, a major purpose of the study was to lay the groundwork for future, more systematic efforts. This is viewed as the first step in a continuing research program which will endeavor to uncover the dynamics of interpersonal transactions in elementary school classrooms. The unstructured observation (together with the supplementary procedures used) permitted the investigators to accomplish the stated objectives of: (1) examining pupil and teacher behavior in the three schools with which the study was concerned; (2) identifying systematic differences in behavior and climate among them; and (3) developing hypotheses about the generalizability and impact of observed differences for more systematic study.

The "wide open" observation that was used has both advantages and limitations but, on balance, seems to have been a fortunate choice for this exploratory work. The next step, hopefully, will provide a more focussed but still basically inductive approach. It should be possible to identify what seem to be the crucial questions from the tentative conclusions offered below and further examination of the data. Approaches such as Psychological Ecology or the Critical Incident Technique can be applied to help to support or refute such hypotheses. More systematic, structured observation schemas may also be used if and as they seem appropriate.

The background data on the sixth grade pupils in each of the three schools are presented in Table One, page C-5, below.[1] This information indicates that pupils' ages, apparent ability, and achievement, as well as their parents' educational backgrounds and occupational status, differed markedly (and not unpredictably) among the three schools. Gross differences between Briar Hill and the other two schools are immediately apparent.[2,3] It seems evident that pupils at Downtown and Brookville are less able, are being educated less effectively, or both, at least in terms of the goals implicit in the test scores reported. Further attention will be given below to the apparent goals and motivation of schools and pupils as well as to questions of pupil ability and educational effectiveness.

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[1] Much of the discussion of the table in Appendix C is duplicated here for the reader's convenience. The inner-city, suburban, and rural schools are referred to as Downtown School, Briar Hill School, and Brookville School, respectively. There were no nonwhite pupils in the class studied at Brookville, one at Briar Hill, and about six (under 20 per cent) at Downtown.

[2] It is interesting to note that pupil records at Briar Hill are virtually complete, while there are numerous gaps at both Downtown and Brookville. If one can assume that the gaps tend to represent less favorable scores (more frequent absences, inadequate information from the home, etc.), then the real differences may be greater than those reflected in Table One.

[3] While Downtown and Brookville Schools each had only one sixth-grade class, there were two sixth grades at Briar Hill. The class available for study turned out to represent a generally higher achieving group than did the other sixth grade, although there was some overlap. In view of this difference, background characteristics such as test scores and parental occupation presented in Table One are computed for each sixth grade separately as well as for all sixth graders. Conclusions should be drawn separately for the total group of suburban sixth graders and for the apparently particularly gifted group that was studied. Unfortunately, essays and observational data were not available for the second sixth grade class at Briar Hill.

Based in part on the observers' impressions, it was anticipated that the inner-city school, Downtown, would be the most heterogeneous, but this expectation was not fully supported for the variables reported in Table One. Most striking, perhaps, is the homogeneity within the class studied at Briar Hill--apparently reflecting the school's grouping practices. The composite scores for the two sixth grades at Briar Hill give a better picture of the children it serves, but the particularly high-achieving, homogeneous class is the one to which reference is made in the remainder of this report. There does seem to be a tendency for the two lower income schools to serve not only older sixth graders, but also a wider age range. Intelligence and achievement scores do seem to reflect somewhat greater variability at Downtown than at the other two schools. The apparent heterogeneity in occupational status at Briar Hill may be partly a function of differential discrimination at the high and low ends of the scale, but it seems also to suggest that suburbia may be less homogeneous than some have thought.[4]

(This section continues and concludes in Appendix C, pages C-41 through C-52. The reader is also referred to the individual school descriptions, pages C-8 through C-40, for additional detail.)

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[4] Parental occupations were scored according to the Socioeconomic Index developed by Otis Dudley Duncan and presented in Albert J. Reiss, Jr., Occupations and Social Status (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1961).

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APPENDICES

A. Sample Observations

B. Sample "Ideal Pupil" Responses

C. "School Days" (To be published)

APPENDIX A

SAMPLE OBSERVATIONS

Included in this section are one recording by each of the two observers for each of the six classrooms studied. Observations in the first grades appear first for Downtown, Briar Hill, and Brookville Schools, respectively. Sixth grade observations follow, in the same order. Dates and real names are included in the original recordings but have been omitted or changed in the following. The text has also been edited for clarity and continuity.

Downtown School
Grade One
Observer #1

I entered the classroom at about 10 A.M., but the children and Mrs. L___ were not there. I went downstairs and found them just finishing recess, which consists of getting drinks of water and going to the bathroom. When the class was back in the room, Mrs. L___ announced that there were three children absent and that others could have the absentees' milk. She called the children's names out one at a time. Each went to the front of the room, got a carton of milk and a straw, and returned to his seat. Not all of the children in the classroom received milk; Mrs. L___ announced that those children who did not have milk could get a drink of water, but no one did. During this time the children moved about the room, talking and playing with one another.

Mrs. L___ told the children to put their heads down on the desk and rest. She was sitting at her seat, apparently doing some paper work, perhaps taking care of milk lists, etc. Several children went up to her desk individually at this time. Toward the end of the rest period, Mr.. L___ came to the rear of the room and got a stack of colored construction paper, which she passed out to the children. She told the children to line up one row at a time at the back of the room and get some crayons. While they were doing this, she repeatedly told various children to take the first box, but the children continued sorting through boxes of crayons, taking the ones they wanted. She passed out some round cardboard discs.

Mrs. L___ then wrote various problems on the board. She would write a number such as 5 and tell the children to put three discs on the left side of their paper. She would then ask them to tell her if this was the right amount, and if not to put how many more discs they need on the other side of the paper. This continued for about ten minutes, with Mrs. L___ drilling the children individually and asking for answers from the group. She then asked them to put their work sheets away. One boy was rather slow, and she asked, "Do you know what to do?" His response was, "Yes." Mrs. L___ said, "Then do it." The class did not use the crayons at this time, but the observer found out later that they were for another exercise.

Mrs. L___ took out a bead line and some clothespins strung on clothes hangers. She indicated to four children that they should come to the front of the room and gave each of them a "counter" of beads or clothespins. She then separated the beads or the clothespins, whichever the case, on each child's counter and put two beads or clothespins on one side of the counter. She wrote a number on the board and asked the class if this was the right number. In other words, this was basically the same exercise as before, using slightly different material. She only did this once, and the children were told to go back to their seats. During this ten-minute exercise period, the children in the classroom were extremely restless, moving about, standing up between the rows, etc. Charles and Clarence were putting their hands on the desks on each side of them and swinging their feet. Mrs. L___ seemed irritated and concerned about some of the behavior in the room, but she did not attempt to change it.

Mrs. L___ had one child from each row go to the back of the room and get the arithmetic books. There were only 23 children present so, in most cases, the rows had between 3 and 5 children in them. The child designated would go to the back of the room, get some books, and pass them out. In several cases, the children forgot to count themselves and had to return and get another book. Mrs. L___ did not comment about this. She also had one of the girls bring the observer a book. The page she had the children turn to showed bead lines with simple problems like the ones that she had been doing. The class called out the answers to the first several questions in unison. She also attempted to call on individuals in the same fashion as in the other two exercises. During this time, the class was again quite noisy, and Mrs. L___ would say, "Let's all do it." Clarence, Charles, and another boy near them were moving about, out of their seats at times, and swinging between the desks. Mrs. L___ said, "Barbara, I didn't see you do it." "Let's all do it." (It seemed that she was not pointing to the picture in the book.)

On one of the problems, the boy sitting near Charles and Clarence called out in an extremely loud voice, "Number Four," and Mrs. L___ looked at him and said, "Shhh! Shhh!" This was the first time during the morning that Mrs. L___ made an obvious effort to quiet the group down, and things had continuously become noisier. Mrs. L___ used the same sound several times in the next few minutes. She then had the first child in each row collect books and bring them to the back of the room.

It was now 10:50, and Mrs. L___ used some cards with dots on them to drill the group in much the same way as she had in the other counting exercise. Clarence, Charles, and the other boy were continuously moving about, and other children became restless. In fact, the general tone had become one of restlessness. This exercise only lasted two minutes before Mrs. L___ told the children to put their heads down. While they had their heads down, Mrs. L___ passed out two kinds of paper, lined writing paper and a mimeographed sheet with rows of different items.

After the brief rest, she explained that they were going to do sets of "one." She showed the class the first row, on which she had circled the first item because it was one item. Several children were called on to see if they understood what she was talking about, then she told them to put it away. Apparently, this was work they would do while other groups were reading. She talked to the class about the writing and pointed to the blackboard where eight different letters were drawn. She told them that she wanted a row of each letter written on the lined paper. She said they should use the distance of one finger between the letters. A girl at the front of the room had apparently started to write the letters. Mrs. L___ said, "Put it down," apparently referring to her pencil. "Not now."

The children in the first three rows went over to the side blackboard for their reading lesson. Mrs. L___ handled the lesson in much the same fashion as the lesson that was observed several weeks ago. She told the children she would work with three words and wrote the words, "I," "is," and "here" on the blackboard. Mrs. L___ pointed to them in turn, and the children chanted the correct responses in unison. She then wrote sentences on the board such as, "Betty said, 'Mother, come here.'" Mrs. L___ asked who could read the sentence, and four hands went into the air. She called on each of these four children. The first three made mistakes, but the lsst one read the sentence correctly. The group repeated this sentence, and Mrs. L___ had children go to the board and put their hands around certain words. It was 11 A.M. when this exercise started, and the observer noticed at 11:03 that some of the children at their seats were already finished with both of their papers. Mrs. L___ worked with the reading group in this fashion until 11:10.

Mrs. L___ then told this group to go back to their seats, and the remaining two rows came over to the side board for their reading lesson. She cleaned the blackboard for the second group, and it is of interest to note that, in doing the lesson, she re-wrote the entire lesson as she had with the first group. She prompts the second group more and works more slowly with them. She did, however, work with the second group longer today than with the first group, a reversal of the situation of several weeks ago. She worked with this group until 11:25, when they returned to their seats. During this fifteen minute reading session, Mrs. L___ made only one disciplinary remark, "Somebody is making a noise I don't like."[1]

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[1] Observer's Comment: Mrs. L___ seems to enjoy working with the first group and does not seem to mind the children's mistakes or her need to prompt them and help them repeat words. She uses a great deal of drill with individual children and with the group

Mrs. L___ left the group momentarily during the reading lesson and went to her desk to get a stack of reading tests. She brought them to the observer and indicated that he might be interested in the reading readiness tests the children had taken. The observer looked at the tests while Mrs. L___ completed the reading session, and he noticed that most of the children had done well. Mrs. L___ made a second trip to her desk and brought the observer a manual which gave test norms, a description of each section, etc. About half of the class had scored in the "excellent" range according to the manual. About three quarters of the children were average or better, with the remainder below. Mrs. L___ made one more trip to see the observer, and at that time she told him that all of the children in the second group had done poorly and that she was going to start over with them. Charles had the lowest score in the room. As Mrs. L___ and the observer talked, she talked about Charles and how much she likes him. She indicated that during lunchtime, Charles often tells other children in the class that their manners are not good and that, "Children should not play with matches."[1]

Mrs. L___ went around the class from child to child, seeing whether or not they had completed their work and making comments to certain individuals. She returned to her desk and began accepting work from the children, one at a time, and correcting it as they stood at her desk. This took approximately five minutes and, at 11:30, Mrs. L___ told the children that they could visit with each other for a few minutes. She then came to the back of the room and told the observer that the morning was just too long, that the children were extremely restless, and that it was very difficult to keep their interest.

At 11:35, Mrs. L___ wrote some numbered lines on the board and drew several circles on each line, varying the number of circles.

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chanting in unison. I had watched these groups several weeks earlier as well. Both times, I felt that there was a rather obvious distinction in the ways she worked with them and her patience with their inability to respond. Also, the second group is not as responsive and does not get as many right answers.

[1] Observer's Comment: The observer was interested today to notice that most of the children, including Clarence and Charles, read much better than they had when he was in the class a few weeks ago. It is also interesting to note that Charles seems to be perhaps one of the happiest boys in the class. He seemed more attentive in general today, even though he plays a great deal, moves about in his seat, and swings on top of his own desk. He does do the work and he seems to get many right answers. Clarence does not seem to be a dull boy.

She put a total of eight number lines on the board and asked who would like to go up to work the problem. She had also written a number at the side of each number line perhaps "5," and that particular line might have two circles drawn on it. Many of the children raised their hands to be called to go to the board. She selected eight of them, and they went to the board to solve the problem. These were nearly identical to the arithmetic exercises the children had worked with earlier in the morning.

Charles was playing with several other children: Clarence, the boy sitting in front of Clarence, and one girl in the front of the room, Linda. Charles was teasing them and running back and forth in the aisle. Mrs. L___ said that the children at the board could pick other children to correct the problem. She placed Linda at the front of the room on a separate chair, but Linda did not stay there very long and was soon back playing with Charles. Mrs. L___ said, "Linda, get on your chair." Linda started moving up the aisle and, as she would come to the desks that were side by side, she would put each hand on a desk and swing as she proceeded up the aisle. Mrs. L___ then said, "Walk up here like you're supposed to," and Linda started walking and swinging her hands. Mrs. L___ said, "Put your hands down to your side." Charles was again swinging on the desks, and Mrs. L___ exclaimed, "Charles!"

Clarence was one of the children picked to go to the front of the room, and he was the last to pick a child to check his problem. Mrs. L___ told him to select someone, and Clarence started walking away from his desk, apparently to pick one of the children. Mrs. L___ said, "Too slow," and with this she picked one of the children who immediately went to Clarence's spot and checked the problem. Clarence, however, was apparently unaware that Mrs. L___ had picked someone for him and continued walking toward the child of his choice. Both Clarence and the person he was going to pick were looking about and seemed to be somewhat confused. Apparently, they realized she had picked someone else, because the boy returned to his seat. Clarence was saying, "I have to go to the bathroom." Mrs. L___ said, "No." She came to the observer again and said, "The morning is too long. The children are restless."

At 11:45, Mrs. L___ went to the front of the room and said, "I am thinking of something green." The children seemed to know this game; their hands immediately went into the air. About five children guessed various green objects and were wrong. Clarence guessed that it was the green clothespins, and he was correct.

Clarence then went to the front of the room and said that his color was black. After about five guesses, someone said, "The clock," and Clarence went to his seat. Then Patty went to the front of the room. She said her color was red and, after about eight guesses, no one had gotten the correct answer. Patty said that it was the flag. At 11:47, the children started preparing to go home for lunch. They put away their things, went to the back of the room, obtained sweaters and coats, and lined up at the door. The observer left the room at this time.

Downtown School
Grade One
Observer #2

As I entered Mrs. L___'s first-grade room, a girl pointed to a seat to indicate it was for me. Mrs. L___ was in the back closet as I entered, and some of the boys in the back of the room said, "Goody, goody!" as they saw me come in. There were many smiles and waves of recognition from the children. Almost immediately after I was seated, Clarence came over and showed me some things from his desk and from his pocket, smiling repeatedly and warmly as I gave him my attention. He showed me some of the papers on the wall that were to be displayed at parents' night that week and tried very hard to find other things that might interest me. Many of the other children decided they would do the same, and they began showing me their drawings and other things they had done. I noticed a group of one boy and two girls who were trying to convince a second boy that he should give me a little plastic flower he had. He seemed very shy and was reluctant to come near me, and after a few minutes the suggestion was dropped. Mrs. L___ came in and nodded to me in recognition. She said, "What is this? This isn't the first grade!" The children became quite orderly again and went back to their seats.

Mrs. L___ walked to the front of the room and told them to sit up straight and fold their hands in front of them because she was going to take attendance, and she waited for all the children to become quiet. She next began reading a story about a duck. In the process, she would show pictures to the children and discuss them in relation to the story. While Mrs. L___ was reading, Ann Marie was helping another girl at her seat. In a few minutes, when Ann Marie interrupted to ask Mrs. L___ a question, she told her to finish helping the girl at recess time. Mrs. L___ then went on with the story. It lasted about ten minutes, after which she took out some cards which had consonants on them. She flipped through them as the children said the names of the letters and the corresponding sounds.

The class moved to the usual drill, which consists of listening to a word and then attempting to determine its first letter. Some children gave hints to other children, but Mrs. L___ told them it wasn't fair to help. Many of the children had the answers wrong, and others continued to give hints. When a child gave a wrong answer, Mrs. L___ would make him repeat the correct answer a number of times before allowing him to return to his seat. Mrs. L___ called on Patty and told the class that this was because Patty was sitting up so nice and straight. At the end of the drill, after requesting the class to count the number of cards which had consonants on them, Mrs. L___ told the children to put their heads down while she placed the cards at different points in the room; on tables, chairs and cabinets. She told eight children to stand up and instructed them to each find a card and to go to the front of the room when they had it. When all eight children were up front and holding their letters, she instructed them to tell the class the names of the letters and their corresponding sounds. Again, many hints were given by the rest of the class, and Mrs. L___ repeated that it wasn't fair to help. She said, "Please do not do it again."

A girl came into the room to call two of the children for speech class, and Mrs. L___ asked the rest of the class to stand and play "loop-de-loop." When Mrs. L___'s back was turned during the game, there was excessive movement among the children, and many things were done incorrectly. However, when she turned to look at the group, everyone became very orderly and did everything correctly. At the end of the game, Mrs. L___ told the children to put their heads down and that there were some very nice resters. As they were resting, she gave out some drawing paper. In about five minutes, she told the children to put their heads up. She instructed them to make a picture for Thanksgiving on one side of the paper and indicated that they could draw anything they liked on the other side. This was to be work they would display for their mothers at the open house.

The "big class" was told to come to one side of the room for reading and to turn to page twenty-three, as was also indicated on the board. When everyone had done so, they examined the first picture in detail. Mrs. L___ had them read a few sentences to themselves. She asked a question about them, then had one child read the sentences out loud. While the children were reading to themselves, Mrs. L___ reminded them a number of times to stop moving their lips. They continued reading the story with very few mistakes and quite a bit of discussion. Once or twice during the reading, Mrs. L___ asked the rest of the class to keep quiet. She reprimanded a few of the boys for making too much noise, but she ignored Charles, who was sprawled out all over the desk.

The first group took twelve minutes to finish their story, and Mrs. L___ then asked the "little class" to come to the side of the room. As they were changing places, a little girl from the first group came over to me and told me I had a green book in my hand. She told me to put that one back because the other group had a red book and was way behind her group in reading. She was quite aware of this and seemed concerned about it. Another little girl came up and asked me if she could put my book away. I told her she could, and I took a red book.

The two children came back from speech class as Mrs. L___ was telling one of the boys who was in that reading group to hurry up and change sides. She then told the page number to the two who had just arrived and waited for them to find it. It took quite a long time in comparison to the first group, and Mrs. L___ waited rather impatiently. She gave this group much more detailed instruction and did not allow them to work on their own as much as the first group. She told them where to sit and not to get into any trouble. William was asked to sit up in front because he was annoying someone else. While the second group was reading, one of the girls in the other group showed me her work and the progress she had made.[1] The second reading group continued its story, reading it dryly and much more slowly than the first group. There was a minimum of discussion between the reading of one section and another. Mrs. L___ took eight minutes with this group and then told them to go back to their seats, while William put the chairs in order.

Mrs. L___ proceeded to look at the pictures the other group had drawn and then told the children to put their pictures away to finish later. The children did not respond quickly to this direction, and Mrs. L___ said, "How many times do I have to tell you to put your things away? You're in the first grade now and one time is enough!" She waited until everyone was settled again, then gave out hand towels, while telling Pamela and Donna that she liked the way they were sitting. The class was asked to line up and, just as the boys were getting in line, the little boy with the flower came to me and handed me the flower. Then he ran back to his place in line. I smiled at him, and he seemed shy and giggly throughout the afternoon whenever I looked at him.

Mrs. L___ chose a game, and each child had two turns at it. When the last girl was asked to choose someone to take her place, she chose Christine. Mrs. L___ said, "No. No. Christine doesn't know how to speak very loudly. Choose someone else, and we'll get it over quickly." There was some difficulty in choosing another person and, becoming impatient, Mrs. L___ told the girl the game was over. She instructed the class to put their heads down and mentioned to the observer that she never saw such "wigglers" in all her life.

The class rested (or tried to rest) for about five minutes, then Mrs. L___ handed out some paper for a writing lesson. Using the board, she showed the class how to make an "x" but, because the papers had x's on them, the children were required to trace the "x" already there on the given line before making one independently. As the children wrote the lesson, Mrs. L___ went around the room helping some of them. While they were writing, somebody in the class did something that annoyed Mrs. L___. She said, "Each day I have to get cross about something," and she told the children it was time they grew up. "If you want to act like kindergarteners, you can go there and join them, but don't do it in here." Clarence asked a question, and she told him to "hush." After the children had completed about four lines of x's, Mrs. L___ instructed one girl in each row to collect the papers. The children were noisy and were told to fold their hands and sit up tall. Mrs. L___ continued to scold them for the noise and indicated that they would sit and do nothing for the rest of the afternoon because they had misbehaved. She told them they always made so much noise when they changed lessons that it was ridiculous. Robert wiggled a bit, and she told him he would have to stay after school.

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[1] Observer's Comment: This type of solicitous behavior is increasing at this school but seems to be on the decline at Brookville.

After a few minutes of general silence, Mrs. L___ said, "Let's see if we can sing." She told the class to sit up straight again, and they sang three songs. Some children who were asked to sing did not seem to know the words. Mrs. L___ prompted them throughout the song. Clarence turned to me as children were being chosen and told me to fold my hands and sit up straight so I would be chosen, too. Mrs. L___ was about to close the lesson when a girl requested a particular song. There was a little noise at this point, and Mrs. L___ clapped her hands for attention and said, "Here we go again." Then everybody sang the song. She made them sing very softly and turned to the observer, saying, "I don't think they'll make the opera." A few children overheard and said, "What?" Mrs. L___ said, "I was talking to (the observer)."

Mrs. L___ indicated that she would choose someone to wash the desks for parents' night. She gave cloths to six girls and told them to wet them and wash their desks. Next, they were to give the cloths to others so that they could do the same. Mrs. L___ told the rest of the children to get a game from the back of the room. They all ran back at once, and she told them to return to their seats and do it again. They were much quieter this time and waited their turns. As the children were washing and playing, the observer left.

Observer's Comment: The observer noticed that Mrs. L___ times each lesson and seems to know when the children are expected to finish a given segment of it. She seems always to have something for them to do, and she can just about tell when they should go on to the next thing.

Briar Hill School
Grade One
Observer #1

The observer entered the classroom shortly after class had begun. It was right after lunch, and the children were in various places about the room playing games. Some of the children were at their own desks coloring or working at a game on an individual basis. However, some children were also at the table at the rear of the room, on the floor toward the front of the room, at the blackboard at the rear of the room, and over at the water fountain getting drinks. This was the first time the observer had noticed the many kinds of games and play activities provided for the children in this classroom. The shelves along the window and drawers in the back are stacked with various kinds of games ranging from the so-called "educational games" to more classical kindergarten kinds of games-there were blocks, various shaped objects which fit together, etc. The children played very freely in this fashion until 1:30 P.M. Miss J___ walked about the room, occasionally chiding a child for some misbehavior, although I could not always detect which behaviors of the children were appropriate and which behaviors were inappropriate. Miss J___ also busied herself doing some erasing and other work at the blackboard as well as work she had at her desk. Part of this involved preparing a list of those children who were to get milk.

At 1:30, Miss J___ told the children that they were going to do a review of their readers. This process consisted of the teacher showing the children a number of pictures and asking them to give her the name of a certain picture. An example concerned a picture of a little girl to which the children would respond with the name, "Betty." Miss J___ continued this for about seven minutes. During this time, she also talked with children about not listening, or she would make such comments as, "That's right, sweetie," in what seemed to be a reinforcing manner. At times she would speak directly to the observer saying, "Isn't she cute?"

After this short lesson, Miss J___ started drawing lines on the board to represent letters - short ones for lower case and longer ones for capitals. The observer supposes Miss J___ was attempting to illustrate to the children the size of capital and small letters. However, she did not indicate this directly. Miss J___ then passed out a sheet of paper to each child with lines and half lines on it and, during the twenty-five minutes that followed, the class made a series of lines on the paper. While this was taking place, Miss J___ would say such things as, "turn your paper around. . . come on Lisa. . . isn't it hot in here?. . ." etc.

At 2:05 P.M., Miss J___ announced to the children that they would now do some exercises. She had made many comments about how difficult the hot room must be for the children. Several times she went to the windows, opened them, and soon closed them again. During the exercises, Miss J___ had one boy stand in front of the class and lead the children as they jumped up and down, standing behind their desks. They did other simple exercises, such as swinging their hands above their heads. Then Miss J___ had one of the girls lead the class as they marched around the room several times weaving in and out among their desks. During the marching, Miss J___ chided them several times about leading the line toward where the other end of the line was, but she gave them little structure, and they continued to have the same trouble. This lasted until about 2:15.

While Miss J___ was getting the children settled down to start another lesson, she took David, the only Negro boy in the classroom, and put him on a chair in front of the class because, "He's not sitting still." In a few minutes, Sharon, one of two Negro girls in the class, joined David on a separate chair in the front of the room for "not sitting still." She followed this with comments directly to the observer that she "loves" the children and they are very "sweet."

Miss J___ started counting with the children. She would write a number on the board, show it to them on the number line, then put another number on the board and ask particular children in the class which number was more. She also asked them to, "prove it." The child would respond with the one that was more, with how many left over, or with how many needed. Repeatedly, Miss J___ would ask the other children whether or not the response was correct. Sharon gave several wrong answers to simple problems, and Miss J___ said, "Let's help her." She had some children form a circle, commenting, "Just these people make the circle with Sharon in the middle." This "game" had a counting goal in that Sharon would guess how many children were going to squat down, and then she would attempt to count the children who had done so. Sharon would then indicate whether she had guessed correctly, more, or less, and by how many. Sharon, however, was not getting the right answers, and Miss J___ said, Jonathon, you come in and take Sharon's place in the middle — so Sharon can catch on." After Jonathon had done this once or twice, the game ended and Miss J___ took Sharon to the front of the room and worked with her on the bead board. The rest of the children milled about for a few minutes. They gradually worked their way to their seats and sat quietly or talked with one another.

At 2:35, Miss J___ told the children to put their "heads down." During this time, she passed out workbooks to each child at his or her desk. When she had finished this, she went to the table in the back of the room and called on one row at a time to come back to her. The children in the row walked back to Miss J___ and, one at a time, she wrote their names with a marker on the front of the workbook. This procedure took twenty minutes. During this time, Miss J___ did not discipline the children; she talked and joked with each one as his or her turn came. After this was finished, I left the classroom and the school for the day.

Observer's Comment: Miss J___'s entire morning of teaching seemed unplanned. I felt many times that her lurch into a new "lesson" was simply because she had run aground in the last one.

Briar Hill School
Grade One
Observer #2

We entered Briar Hill School at ten thirty in the morning, and I went directly to Miss J___'s room. I noticed that the seating had been rearranged since the last time I was there. Previously, there had been groups of four desks. Now the children were seated in rows. I noticed, too, that the "number line" that they had been using, which only went up to ten before, was from sixteen to twenty. The children were seated at the left hand side of the room looking at a large book which was placed on a board in front of the blackboard. They were looking at the pages trying to say some words that they had learned before.

Miss J___ stopped the lesson and talked to me directly. She said this was the first day they had read the book and they were going to go through it all and later do it section by section. She also said they had taken a reading test, which would divide the class into three smaller groups. Then she focused her attention on the group and they began to talk about the pictures they saw in the book. She showed them a few cards with simple words printed on them and asked the children to come up and match the word on the cards with those in the book. This went on for a while until the word "ride" was introduced. Miss J___ turned to the back of the room and told me that even though the cards made a distinction between "Ride" (with a capital) and "ride" (with a small letter), it really didn't make a difference to her right now. While she was talking to me a boy raised his hand. She told him twice to wait, then recognized him and allowed him to tie his shoelace.

They went on looking at the words in the book and Miss J___ tried to explain an exclamation point that was in the stories. She had the children repeat the word "Tom!" (with an exclamation point after it), which meant that they would say it in a very dramatic way. Miss J___ put her arm around one of the children and put her hand on the head of another. She told the children to "wake up", and this call to attention occurred repeatedly throughout the morning. While the children were looking at the words in the book and telling stories about the pictures, a man outside was mowing the lawn. There was a great deal of interest every time the machine went by the windows. Finally, the teacher gave up and had all the children walk over to the window to watch the man mowing grass. She turned to me and said something about the fact that could they do this before class, but then she turned her attention back to the children at the window and had them count the number of cutters on the machine. She asked them how it worked. There were repeated guesses, and children came up with many answers. They then talked about cutting grass, and the teacher reprimanded some of them for not paying attention or not being still. The game shelf was right underneath the window; many children were playing with games on the shelf.

Miss J___ then asked the children how they might know that grass was being cut if they couldn't see it. There were a few guesses, and some said they could hear the machine, but she obviously wanted the answer that they could smell the cut grass. As the children were groping for this answer, she looked at me and asked me if I knew, and I nodded. She said to the children, "See, even our visitor knows what I mean." Finally, one of the children came up with the right idea. They were then told to get back to their seats and this was the end of the lesson.

It was now 10:50. As the children were settling down in their seats, Miss J___ came back to where I was sitting and asked when I would be in the school next. I told her that I didn't know my plans, and she seemed to accept this. She told me that I should have been there on Friday. They had visited a third grade class and seen them doing some art work; the children had been excited. She then walked to the front of the class and asked the children what an "action word" was, or to give an example of one. Somebody did give an example, and she asked if they would recognize that particular word in the book. Some children nodded, "Yes." She told them to sit as still as wood, and (from this) a discussion of Pinocchio followed. They talked about puppets and about Shari Lewis and the name of her characters.

Miss J___ looked at a Negro girl, Sharon, and asked her if she was playing with her desk. Sharon was about to take something out of or put something into her desk. Miss J___ asked her if she was supposed to do that while class was going on, and Sharon answered, "No." Miss J___ said that was right and "You'd better not if you want to stay healthy." After this, she came back to where I was sitting and showed me some pictures the children had drawn from story book characters the previous day. She told me that I might find them interesting because of the various maturity levels illustrated. Miss J___ went back to the front of the room and told the children to take out their pencils. She handed out mimeographed sheets which pictured circles, triangles, and other geometric figures. The entire class went over them line by line to see what was there and what patterns they made. At this point, the door swung open. I decided to close it and walked over to do so. As she often does, Sharon looked up to see what I was doing. Miss J___ noticed that she was not paying attention and reprimanded her. At the same time, a boy left his seat to go to the bathroom; he was told to go back and not to walk around while Miss J___ was talking. He went back to his seat, raised his hand, and was given permission.

The children worked alone on the mimeographed sheets, coloring and writing in numbers on the circles, triangles, etc., while the teacher again came to the back of the room to talk to me. She showed me the reading test the children had taken the day before and explained it to me. She told me that she didn't particularly care for the test, and then went on to talk about Stephen, a Negro boy in the class. She told me about his home life and his parental situation and said that he was a very intelligent little boy but rather lazy. Because of all the environmental factors, she feels, he needs a lot of work. She repeated two or three times that he needed a lot of individual instruction.

I asked Miss J___ why there was a change in the seating arrangements. She said that she preferred the children to sit in little groups but that it was easier for them to see the board in this situation. She also told me that she had to separate a few children. She left me to inspect some of the work the children were doing when they raised their hands and walked over to them to give them individual instruction. She then came back and asked me what field I was going into, I told her, and she left.

She told the children that after they had finished the papers, they might draw on the back. While helping one little girl, she heard a moan and asked who was in pain. "Is it you, Sally?" she asked. "Is it you, David?" He shook his head,"No," but she still wanted to know who moaned. Miss J___ asked David to look at her, he wouldn't, and she realized that there was something wrong. He was crying. She went over to him, and he told her that his paper had torn. He was very upset, and she put her arm around him and told him that if anything like that happened in the future, to please ask her and she would give him a new paper. He was given a new paper and started to work again. Miss J___ walked to the back of the room and asked me why was it that certain children become so emotional about such little things. She asked the children who were seated in the last seat of the row to collect the papers and told the children that they would be able to finish during the afternoon.

It was now 11:30, and Miss J___ told the children they would have music. As the papers were being collected, she walked around the room and inspected some of them. It seemed that two of the girls had not gotten the idea and did not ask for help. They were told that they would have a chance again in the afternoon to correct their work. While the papers were being collected, a boy very abruptly took away a paper from a girl who hadn't put her name on it. He was then reprimanded for having been rude to her and was told to apologize. On the other side of the room, a little boy had his desk out of position. Miss J___ went over to him and said, "You're an exhibitionist, aren't you? You kind of like to be different!" She became quite angry and told him to put his desk back where it was supposed to be.

Miss J___ then went to the front of the room with a song book and started teaching a song called, "Old Mrs. Witch." After they had sung once, she realized that they were much too low, so she took out her pitch pipe. She said to me in a loud stage whisper that she hated the thing, but that it was very helpful. During the singing and learning of the words, Sharon began jumping around. The teacher asked her if she needed to go to the bathroom and she said, "No." I noticed also that Stephen seemed very distracted, paid very little attention to the singing, and didn't sing at all throughout the lesson. Miss J___ sometimes forgot or mixed up the words, and the children tried to correct her. She answered that they really didn't know the words anyway. She also told them that it was their turn to have the piano next week. Suddenly, at this point, they jumped to talking about Fire Prevention Week. It seemed that the previous week had been Fire Prevention Week, and they had learned a song about it. The combined music lesson and discussion continued until ten minutes before noon. The children were then asked to get their wraps, and I left for the day.

Brookville School
Grade One
Observer #1

I arrived at 10 A.M., and the class was in the midst of an arithmetic lesson. The children were working on a page of problems that included looking at pictures of apples with the word "and" between; the task was to read, "One apple and one apple are two apples." Stacy was asked by Mrs. N___ to read a problem. After several erroneous attempts, Mrs. N___ said rather loudly, "Stacy, look at your book when you read!" She then asked Melanie to read the same problem, and Melanie also read the statement incorrectly. At this time, Mrs. N___ said, "Stop it! Pay attention, Melanie!" Then the entire class read the problem and re-read it several times. Mrs. N___ moved around the room from child to child stopping occasionally to help a child draw the answer. After helping an individual child, she would often make a remark like, "Now read it to me." Belinda was having some problems. Mrs. N___ said "and" and "are," inserting the key words in the problem to prompt the child. She then said, "Are what? Let's all read it." After the class read the problem she said, "I heard some boo-boos again. What are you going to do now?" The class responded unanimously, "Write it down." Mrs. N___ said, "Okay, do it."

At 10:20, she announced that it was time for the Catholic children to go to church. Five children lined up at the door and, in a few minutes, left the room. During the next ten minutes, the rest of the children worked on arithmetic at their seats. Mrs. N___ corrected the lesson, one row at a time, at her desk on the side of the room. She asked Denise to go over and "tell the observer why you were out of school yesterday." Denise walked over and told me that her shot had hurt her yesterday and that she had stayed home. I asked Denise where she lived, and she told me, "In the country." She also told me that she lived on a farm, that they had some horses, and that they liked living in the country. She said that they used to live in Syracuse, and that her father works sometimes in Syracuse, sometimes in Toronto. Mrs. N___ then said, "David, go over and tell the observer what you are going to do Saturday." David walked over to my chair and told me that he was going to be a ring bearer in a wedding. He had already practiced and was going to practice again on Friday instead of coming to school. He said that he carried the ring on a pillow. He also told me the name of the girl who was going to carry the flowers. At 10:30, Mrs. N___ started distributing some marked papers.

After this, she passed out circle patterns to various children. She held one pattern in the air and, apparently having already called out the name once, said very loudly, "This is for Burt, if he'll ever get over here." The children were drawing circles of various sizes on black paper, and Mrs. N___ came over and talked to me for a few minutes about a pamphlet written by Henry E. Garrett to present evidence in support of segregation in public schools. She had mentioned it before, as well, and I told her that I would be interested in having a copy. She said that she would be glad to give me hers. In general, she felt it was probably inaccurate and wondered what I thought.

She then told me about the Protestant minister, who is new in the community and who has cut out a religious education class which had apparently been conducted on a once-a-week basis in the past. She was concerned that he is not cooperating with the schools and that he is moving into the community and making changes without considering the people who live there. She also commented about losing Bonnie, a pupil who recently moved away, and she mentioned that Noreen had moved back into kindergarten and that Noreen's sister, Diane, had moved into this room from the second grade.

Mrs. N___ told the children to cut out their small circles and fold them in half. She noticed that Stacy had cut her small circle in half and said, "You've proved to me, time and time again, that you don't listen." Betty had cut her circle in half, too, but Mrs. N___ went to Betty's desk and helped her draw a new one. She did not, however, chastise Betty for doing the same thing that Stacy had done. Then she went to the front of the room and noticed that Toni had also cut her circle in half. She said, "Not you, too." She then directed the children to place their folded small circles according to a certain direction that she had drawn on the board. She said to Burt, "You, you're not listening again." Burt had not placed his paper facing the same direction as the one shown on the board.

Belinda came to me and said, "When I grow up to be a big girl, I am going to be a nurse girl." Belinda made this statement very quickly, then returned to her seat. While passing me, Mrs. N___ commented that she thought she had come up with an idea that made directions "easy to follow," seeming to indicate that she was concerned about all the mistakes that had been made during the art period.

As they were completing the task, the children started to make other things out of the black paper and joke with one another. For example, they put paper up to their lips like mustaches. They put circles around their eyes like black eyes, and they made nurses' caps, beards, earrings, etc. Many of the children who had completed the task played this way and joked with one another for about ten minutes. During this time, Mrs. N___ did not talk to them about misbehavior. The children were giggling, playing, and in general having a good time.

Observer's Comment: Mrs. N___ seldom disciplines the children on behavioral matters. She seems to be relatively content with their behavior, and I sense a level of understanding that children simply act in certain ways. However, during the observations of classroom time, it appears again and again that Mrs. N___ "disciplines learning." I mean by this that she hammers at the children about small details. She talks with them very sternly about not having their papers turned the right way and missing answers. She works in a "discipline" frame of reference with learning concepts, as though she expects, literally, to pound the facts into them.

Brookville School
Grade One
Observer #2

We entered Brookville School at approximately 9:00 A.M. and found it almost deserted except for a few teachers doing work in their rooms. We soon learned that the school buses were not due to arrive until about 9:30 and waited until the children arrived. At 9:35, I walked into the room of Mrs. N___, the first grade teacher. I was greeted by the usual warm responses of the children. Barbara came over to shake my hand, then seated herself again. The children were talking and playing, looking at their books or visiting with one another, some were coloring. Mrs. N___ walked over to me. She told me one of the children was demoted to kindergarten because the parents had lied about her age when she first entered the school. Her sister, who was previously in the second grade, was now in her seat in the first grade, and they had sent the younger girl back to kindergarten.

Mrs. N___ then showed me a note from the mother of another of the girls, Bonnie. Bonnie is moving in a few days and is terribly upset. Her mother had decided to let her remain in school for the duration of the week. She asked Mrs. N___ to cooperate by "putting up" with Bonnie during this difficult time and requested that she let Bonnie leave the room and stay with the nurse for the first fifteen minutes of class. Apparently, Bonnie had said that she was frightened by the noise that the other children made when they were playing. Mrs. N___ had previously led Bonnie to the nurse's office, and Bonnie was there while Mrs. N___ and I were talking.

A few minutes later, Mrs. N___ asked the class to please stand. I was busy looking at the children while taking notes and didn't pay much attention to this command, but when the children turned around and faced me I realized they were really facing the flag. I hopped up quickly and said the Pledge of Allegiance with them. They then sang "My Country Tis of Thee." The time was 10:10 A.M., and the class began.

Mrs. N___ began by asking who could tell her all the vowel sounds. She wanted to know the sound of each particular vowel. Some answers were given, and she then asked the children what consonants they had studied. They replied that they had talked about "t" and "g". Attention turned to a bulletin board with various pictures on it. Mrs. N___ asked the children to pick out pictures that began with a "t" and then to pick out those with "g". When a child was stumped and couldn't pick out a picture immediately, a number of hands went up and children started calling out, "I know," or, "I can." One boy named Kenneth was very eager to answer. He was stretching out of his seat with his hand all the way up. Finally, he was so wound up that he had kicked his chair away and stretched so tall that his pants almost fell down. But he soon sat down again and was reprimanded for being out of his seat. During this exercise of picking out pictures, a great many children either got the wrong answer or couldn't think of pictures to pick. If a child answered incorrectly, Mrs. N___ would yell, "No!" at him, or say something like "If goat began with a 't,' it would be toat, so what is it?" Given such examples, the children would finally get the answer or give up. During this period, there was continual yelling of "I see one," or "I know it!" when someone was having trouble. Usually Eddie started this, and many others picked it up.

It was then time to read the chart Mrs. N___ prepares every day telling the date, the number of boys and girls in the classroom, and the type of weather outside. This was read once with the class as a whole, then four times by individual children. Most of the children knew exactly what was on it even without looking. Immediately after this, Mrs. N___ told the class to take out scrap paper and instructed two children to give out orange and black paper. There were many cries of "Oh boy!" and "Wowie!" Mrs. N___ left the room to retrieve Bonnie from the nurse's office. At this time, scissors were also being given out. The children became a little noisier when Mrs. N___ left the room but while the talking increased, it was not totally out of hand. The children were asking each other where Bonnie was and looking around. Mrs. N___ soon re-entered the room, and it calmed down again. She then asked the Catholic children to get their jackets; five children went to the closet, got their wraps, and lined up. The others were told to bring their papers up to the teacher's desk for some paste. After the line was reprimanded for being too noisy, the children were allowed to leave the building for religious instruction,

In a few minutes, Bonnie came up to Mrs. N___'s desk. She was crying just a little, and Mrs. N___ told her that it was all right, as soon as she started cutting she would forget about it. The children near Bonnie's desk became very concerned about her, especially Eddie. Mrs. N___ asked the children to cut out a pumpkin from the orange paper and to use the black for trimming the eyes, the stem, and the mouth. She walked around, looked at some of the pumpkins the children were cutting out, and told the children to make really big ones and to use as much of the orange as possible. She told some children that there was really nothing left of theirs, since they had cut them much too small, although no instructions had been given in advance. The children had not been told to make an outline or to follow any set pattern, yet they were reprimanded for not having very large pumpkins. Mrs. N___ stayed in one place most of the time to oversee the work, but she showed very little interest in what the children were doing. They were left pretty much on their own to do what they wanted. At one point, Mrs. N___ walked around the room giving instruction. She seemed amused at some of the pumpkins that were made, but didn't actively become a part of this lesson after her comments at the beginning. She told the children that if they had finished, they could take the paste back.

It was now about 10:30, and the speech teacher came to take three of the children to speech class. Mrs. N___ called the other children row by row to come out into the hall, and she placed their pumpkins on the bulletin board while they watched. Then they went back to their seats. During this time there was much activity in the room. Kenneth moved his chair around, and a lot of the children were out of their seats. Mrs. N___ finished decorating the bulletin board, called for the collection of the scissors, and told the boys and girls to throw away their orange paper. The black paper was collected.

The class settled down in about ten minutes, and Mrs. N___ asked the children to be very quiet and to listen to her. She told them that she would tap a given number of times with her ruler on the back of an easel, and she wanted the child she called on to go to the board and write the number of the times that she had tapped. While she was explaining the rules of this new game, she told one little girl to put her toys away and that she was angry at her because everyday she had to tell her to put play things away. Finally, the lesson got under way, and Mrs. N___ tapped a number of times and called on a girl, who went to the board and wrote the number. During one of these examples, a little boy was called on and he wrote the number very, very large on the board. After this, other children did the same thing. The children returned from speech clinic. Mrs. N___ tapped once and asked Barbara, who had been out, to come and do "the hard one." Apparently proud that she had been called on, Barbara walked to the board and wrote the number, "2." There was a great deal of laughing at this, but Mrs. N___ explained that Barbara had been out of the room. The children gave her another chance, Mrs. N___ tapped once, and Barbara corrected herself and wrote a big "1" on the blackboard.

Mrs. N___ took out some cards with numbers on them and told the children that she was going to ask them to jump the number of times that was on the card. She called on someone to do this and, after about three people had had turns, she asked Burt to bow the number on the card. He did not do this correctly - he was going very quickly and got the wrong number. Mrs. N___ asked him to do it more slowly. He didn't really seem to understand. She finally asked him if he could do it more slowly. He said, "No," so she called on someone else to do it. This little girl did it very slowly and correctly. Mrs. N___ then asked them either to hop the number of snap the number on their fingers. Finally, she had several children run the numbers from one end of the classroom to the other. Barbara was called on to run the number, "1." She was poorly coordinated when she did this, and she did it wrong. Mrs. N___ had explained that from one end of the classroom to the other and back would be counted as one. So when Barbara went only one way and sat down, Mrs. N___ asked the children if they thought Barbara had listened, and they said that she hadn't. Mrs. N___ again explained that down and back was to be counted as one. She then called on Burt, who also did it wrong. She said he hadn't listened, either. Finally she called on Bonnie, who had stopped crying and had been quite absorbed in both the coloring lesson and in this one. As Bonnie was running the number, the children started counting aloud. Mrs. N___ told them to keep still until she was finished, and she did it correctly. Stacy, a girl, was called on next, and she did it wrong, too. Mrs. N___ got very annoyed and again said, "Did she listen, class?" The class yelled, "No!"

In the next part of the arithmetic, the children were to write on the blackboard the number of disc pictures that Mrs. N___ showed them on a card. I noticed that she called on those children whom she knew were capable of handling large numbers to do the problems with numbers 8, 9, and 10, while those whom she felt could not handle these were given the smaller numbers.

Mrs. N___ asked me if I had ever seen their number game. I told her that I hadn't, and the class became very excited at the prospect of playing this game for me. The person who was number one came up to the front of the room holding the card at chest level and said, "My name is Number One. The next child had the card with the number "two," and said, "My name is Number Two, I come after Number One." This process continued up to ten, after which Mrs. N___ scrambled the numbers up. She put ten on the opposite side and mixed up those in the middle. The children in their seats as well as those up front were very excited. Mrs. N___ then asked a girl to re-assemble the line of ten in order by pulling children out and putting them into the right places. By this time, everyone was giggling. Mrs. N___ then asked individual children to go up and bring her the various numbers. As soon as everyone was seated again, Mrs. N___ asked the children on the first row to go and wash their hands for lunch.

This was a social time, and the children were allowed to talk to one another. Kim, a girl, asked Mrs. N___ if she could go to the front of the room and read a book that she had learned at home. She was permitted to do this but, after the first few minutes, none of the children was paying attention to her, so Mrs. N___ asked her to come and read the book for us in the back of the room. After she had done so, Mrs. N___ told her that she would be allowed to do more reading the next day, and Kim went to wash her hands with the rest of the group. Then Mrs. N___ talked to me about the released time program. She told me how different it was this year than last.

She also told me about the problems of a little girl in the class named Tammy, who had been born with a cleft palate, and about her own problems in communication with Tammy. We discussed Bonnie's moving again, and Mrs. N___ shouted to one boy to clean up his desk. By the time all the children had finished washing and going to the bathroom, it was 11:25, and the children were almost ready to go to lunch. Mrs. N___ was annoyed that they had taken out their books again, that Barbara had gone over and taken out a puzzle, and Mrs. N___ was particularly disturbed about this. She told Barbara that she had been strictly told not to do this and she had deliberately done it. Barbara reluctantly put the puzzle back. The children were then asked to clear their desks, and Mrs. N___ gave out the lunch tickets. She asked the people who were having a full lunch to get in line first, and the rest lined up after them. After this, they walked out of the room to lunch.

Downtown School
Grade Six
Observer #1

The observer entered the classroom at 9:30 A.M. and went immediately to the rear of the room and took a seat. Mr. H___ was asking the class, "What is an open sentence?" The first pupil he pointed to with his finger, a boy sitting in the first seat in the left hand row, could not answer. He then pointed to a second pupil, a girl sitting behind him, who could not answer the question either. Mr. H___ asked her if she could write an example on the board. This she was able to do. He asked her to tell him what an open sentence was, and she still could not do it. He had others in the class use her example to explain to the class what an open sentence was.

Mr. H___ used an illustration of an arithmetic equation giving a number on one side, leaving a space which was illustrated by a square box. The children then were able to fill in the appropriate number to meet the equation. After the girl's example had been completed by the rest of the class, Mr. H___ returned to the first boy who could not answer the question and asked him again. This time the boy repeated the correct answer, and Mr. H___ asked for it once again. After he had finished the individual drill with the boy, he said, "See, you can do it," and he commented to the entire class that they would all do this well.

Mr. H___ then wrote the number 3914 on the board and called on individual pupils to read it. One boy said, "Three thousand, nine hundred, and fourteen." Many of the children responded with excited "Oohs," and "Aahs," indicating that he had made a mistake. Mr. H___ called on two others who also offered apparently incorrect answers. The fourth respondent said, "Three thousand, nine hundred, fourteen," the response desired. Then Mr. H___ had the entire class chant the number that way several times. "Three thousand, nine hundred, fourteen." He told them that when they inserted the word, "and," he would put a decimal there and call them wrong.[1]

Mr. H___ began to write another problem on the board and, as he did so, he said, "Isn't my writing pretty?" A student near him said, "Uh-huh," and many of the children chuckled. Mr. H___ said to the class, "Watch me while I write this. I may try to trick you." After some discussion of that particular exercise, Mr. H___ said he wanted Antonio to present the first problem from the book. Antonio (who is a girl) got out of her seat, went directly to the blackboard in the front of the room, and wrote the number "7065." The observer did not have a book and could not see the problem, but she was apparently right. Mr. H___ responded, "Very good. She didn't forget." He then asked someone to come to the board and do the same problem in another way. In much the same manner, he asked another student to come to the board and do it a third way.

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[1] Observer's Comment: This simple and perhaps irrelevant exercise caused a great deal of excitement, The children were, in effect, fighting with each other to get their hands in the air first, and the ones who thought they knew the answer were extremely excited, hoping that they would be called on to give the right response. They would call out verbally, although not giving the answer, sometimes in spontaneous unison. This activity is extremely common in this class, and Mr. H___ seldom disciplines children for talking out excitedly during a classroom exercise. In fact he seems to go out of his way to encourage the overall excitement and enjoys getting the class keyed up.

Mr. H___ then said to a girl in the class, "I haven't had you to the board in five years," simultaneously handing her some chalk and indicating that she should go to the board. As she did so, he asked her to put the problem on in a fourth way and made a friendly comment referring to the class party the previous Friday. After she had gone to the board, she returned to her desk to look at the book once more. Mr. H___ said to her, "Take a good look." She began to carry her book with her to the front of the room, but Mr. H___ did not let her take it to the blackboard. She then stopped to take another look at it and, this time, many children in the classroon snickered. Mr. H___ said, "Give her a chance." He went with the girl to the front of the room and assisted her in putting the problem on the board. She was not able to complete the problem, however, and another child was called to come up and finish it. He said to this girl, "You haven't answered a question for a while. You'd better get this one."[1]

At 9:55, a girl came into the room and handed Mr. H___ a note. He took the note, said, "Excuse me," to the class, and made some comment to the girl, she then left. Just as she had left the room, another girl, also with a note, stood at the door. Mr. H___ hesitated a minute, seemed somewhat annoyed, and said, "Oh, come on in." He read the note for several minutes before addressing the class. "Let me take a minute to explain this." He told the class that every year the school made friendship boxes, which he described as boxes of donated things, mostly school supplies, that would be sent to children in foreign countries.

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[1] Observer's Comment: It seems evident that these children compete with one another in extremely active ways in an attempt to be called on, but it seems not to matter whether or not they know the correct answers. Perhaps an effort to get attention?

Several children asked questions about different kinds of things they could bring. When the girl had left the room, Mr. H___ continued with an explanation of factoring. He said, "Watch me closely," and he proceeded to do some problems on the board. It was a minute or two after ten o'clock when Mr. H___ gave the class an arithmetic assignment, taking about five minutes to explain it. The class then settled down to a study period, apparently doing the assigned work.

Several boys were in the front of the room asking Mr. H___, apparently in jest, to give them some money. He said he had to go to the bank first. He then said to the observer that he and the boys had played a game at the party on Friday and that he had lost and owed the boys some money. Mr. H___ then walked around the room from student to student seeing what they were doing, examining their work, and supervising their study very closely. He commented at one time, "Make me work for my money. If you have questions call me over." One boy started to put his books away and Mr. H___ asked him if he was through. The boy responded that he was, and Mr. H___ went over and looked at his paper. Mr. H___ said the paper looked correct and told the boy to get his book and check it.[1]

At 10:25, Mr. H___ told the class to take out their spelling books. He also told them that he wanted them to save all of the papers they had been doing during the past two weeks. He said he was going to give them each a folder which they should prepare for parents' night on Monday. Also, he indicated that, instead of having conferences with their parents as in the past, the teachers are having an open house. He told them he wanted to explain this to them and wanted them to know that he did not "go along with it." He said he liked talking with their parents and had been looking forward to it. He went on to say that he had told the Board of Education of his opposition to the change. He said he wanted the students to understand and that perhaps he could chat informally with some of the parents during the evening and "no one will know about it."

A boy who had corrected his arithmetic paper got a score of 96, and Mr. H___ commented to the class that that was extremely good for this lesson. In a few minutes, a girl brought her paper to him. After seeing her score he said, "Another 96. Maybe I am learning how to teach." He also commented, "Gum--candy," apparently directing this to a person in the class who was engaged in gum chewing.

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[1] Observer's Comment: It is very common for Mr. H___ to move around the room and check on individual work from time to time. In fact, he is perhaps the most active teacher, in a physical sense, among those we are observing. He seldom goes to his desk and sits doing other work, which seems to be characteristic of many teachers. He also encourages the children repeatedly to bring their questions to him.

He started the spelling lesson. He said, "You read," pointing to a girl, and continued, "while (I missed the name) takes a walk." With this, the girl stood up to read a story that was apparently part of the spelling lesson, and a boy went to the wastebasket and threw away his gum.

After the girl had completed the story, the class started discussing the word "disease," which had been in the spelling lesson. Mr. H___ asked the class to tell him what it meant. One boy, the first he called on, said, "It's a bacterial growth inside the body." Other responses included "measles," "TB," and "cancer." He asked the class to look up the word in the back of their spelling books, which they did. He repeated the same basic procedure with the word "soldier" and got such responses as, "fights for a cause" and "fights for government." Mr. H___ said, "I fight you everyday," and several members of the class laughed. The next word, "manufacturer," got such responses as "making things," "machinery," "making things by hand," and "producing things." Mr. H___ gave the class an assignment to give all of the meanings that had been given for these words, plus the meanings out of the book, and their own comments. He said this was a very hard assignment but, "You can do it. You are good students. This is a good class."

Mr. H___ came to the rear of the room, where I talked with him for a few minutes. I asked how the observations were going in general and how bothersome it was to have observers in the room. He indicated that it was no inconvenience and that, in fact, most of the time he was not aware that an observer was present. He said he thought the children seldom thought about the observers, either, and he mentioned that only about four students had looked back when I arrived today. I asked his feelings about the note-taking during the observations, and he indicated that this was not causing him any anxiety. He also told me that the student teacher was no longer with him. He said that she had had a bad day and that the principal had decided to try to get her through, so she was now in the kindergarten room to complete her student teaching. He said, "It's up to the University to fail her." The observer left the classroom and the building at 11 A.M.

Downtown School
Grade Six
Observer #2

I entered Downtown School at about 10 A.M. and noticed that Mr. H___, the sixth-grade teacher, was not in his room. Miss S___ , his student teacher, was conducting the lesson, and the visiting teacher, Miss K___, was sitting in the back of the room and helping with discipline. As the observer entered, a mother came in with her children to be registered. The principal was away, and Miss K___ was handling registration. As she left, she asked me to please help Miss S___ if the children needed disciplining. She told me that Miss S___ needed a lot of help because the class often got away from her. I walked to the back and sat down in Mr. H___'s chair. Miss S___ was conducting a lesson in letter writing. She seemed to be having difficulty, as the class seemed very disorganized. It was noisy in the room, and very few children were paying attention to Miss S___. Two children were doing a project in the back of the room, a map explanation for the back bulletin board. Miss S___ battled with the class for about five minutes, attempting to move toward a point she wanted to make. The class was going its own way.

Within five minutes, Miss S___ decided to give up and gave the class an assignment which she indicated would be collected in fifteen minutes. She explained the assignment three times. The children settled down and were much quieter. Some children were in their seats, others got up to ask the teacher questions, but there seemed to be more order in the classroom. The milk was delivered, and one boy wanted Miss S___ to put his milk in the refrigerator. She took the milk from him and told him to sit down. But she had to repeat this command three or four times before he complied. He insisted that his milk be put in the refrigerator immediately, because he didn't want it to spoil. While the children were working on the assignment, Miss S___ walked around and inspected some of their papers. She told one boy to sit in the back of the room because of disobedience. He cursed her under his breath for the half hour he was there. More children began to leave their seats and walk around the room. Miss S___ told them to sit down and raise their hands if they had any questions.

At about 10:10, Miss K___ entered again and attempted to get the children seated. They responded as she conjoled them into their seats. She seemed quite effective at this. Then Mr. H___ walked in and, very suddenly, the class quieted down. A girl breathed a sigh of relief and said, "Oh, Mr H___, you're back." Soon after this, he left again with Miss K___, and the noise level began to rise again, although it did not reach its previous intensity.[1]

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[1] Observer's Comment: I noticed that misbehaving children would sometimes look rather suspiciously toward me and then discontinue

Mr. H___ was out of the classroom most of the morning, returning only briefly from time to time. He would look around at the chaotic situation and try to straighten things out. Once, for example, he asked sternly, "Is this a classroom?" Then he answered his own question, "No, it isn't. It's a social tea hour. And you'd better get your math books out quickly." The children were slow to respond, and he added, "I don't mean tomorrow, I mean today. Right now!" He told the children working on the project in the back that they had better be quiet or they would be off it. He then proceeded to review the math lesson including formulas for the circumference and area of a circle and the concepts of radius and diameter.

The children started reviewing their homework, and Mr. H___ asked if they wanted any of the examples done on the board. He told the children he would not "bite" if they asked any questions and that it was the only way to learn. A girl requested one of the examples to be put on the board, and Mr. H___ proceeded to do it for her. He then asked for others that might have caused the children trouble, and someone gave him another one. Eventually, Mr. H___ did all the examples from the homework. He told the children repeatedly that he didn't mind doing this, and they continued to give him problems.

One example involved a division problem, and Mr. H___ asked the girl who suggested the example to help him do the division. She attempted it the long way, and he told her that he expected her to do it with the help of "new math." Also, he indicated that he expected her to do it in her head. When the class moved to another example which included division, Mr H___ asked for a volunteer who could divide using the "new math." A student raised her hand and he called on her. When she had finished, Carmen yelled out, "It's wrong," and Mr. H___ asked her why she thought it was wrong. She gave him an explanation, but he maintained that it was right. Again he asked if there were any examples the class wanted him to show them, but it seemed that they were becoming bored. Carmen disagreed with the last answer, and he explained again why it was correct. He then reprimanded somebody for talking too loudly, telling her that she had given him her word to be quiet and that, if she continued, he would change her seat.

As the class was going over the last problem, Mr. H___ told the children that it had been designed by the authors to trick them. They then talked about squaring numbers and, in giving an

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their misbehavior. Thus, my presence might have had a limiting effect on the situation.

example, Mr. H___ wrote on two different boards. In the process, he copied a number incorrectly. The children yelled that it was wrong, and he indicated that this was an honest mistake and not done on purpose (suggesting that he had, in the past, made mistakes on purpose in an attempt to catch the children). Mr. H___ did the last example rather hurriedly, and most of the children did not pay attention. He named one girl in particular and implored them to pay attention, "as if your life depended upon it." He explained that their lives may just depend on math some day. He said, "Girls can't be housewives for the rest of their lives. They work now-a-days, you know."

While solving the last example, Mr. H___ found that some children did not know their multiplication tables. He told the class that he used to go over multiplication tables with sixth graders but had stopped because someone told him that sixth graders should know this by now. He then said, "Well, maybe we'll do it just for fun." He then looked at Miss S___ and me and said, "Those guys in the back are included. I like to shake them up a little bit." (I smiled and shook my head.) Mr. H___ called on some children in the class in rapid-fire order to recite the table of 'nines." After calling on six or seven children, he gave up the idea and explained a trick to help them multiply "nines."

Mr. H___ told the children to turn to page 97 and asked if they would help him work through the problems. He then proceeded to go over some problems in perimeter that had been assigned for homework the previous day. He looked around the classroom and saw some children yawning. He told the children please not to yawn in his face but to try and cover it up because it upset him. Mr. H___ then started mumbling, and the children looked at him saying, "What? What'd you say?" He replied, "See, I can get your attention by speaking Greek, but when I speak English, you don't seem to listen. Maybe the next time you'll listen when I speak English."

Mr. H___ began another example and got the wrong answer. He looked at it and asked the children if they could locate the error. After a few minutes of consultation, he found that someone had given him the wrong numbers. He changed the numbers and began the problem again. After arriving at the answer, he instructed the children to read everything carefully and not do what he did when he was young. (I assume this pertained to some story he had told the children previously.) The children began on the second example, and Mr. H___ asked the girl to read the example while he helped her. In helping her, he made a mistake, but he corrected it and they moved to the next example. He admitted that the examples were hard and after, they had done two problems, he indicated that they would continue tomorrow. "Save your papers," he said.

Proceeding to a discussion of space figures, Mr. H___ told the class to turn to page 98. Space figures were described and contrasted with plane figures. Mr. H___ continued, "In kindergarten they do examples using these figures in the middle of the year." He then promised to bring the kindergarten children up to show their work to the sixth graders. Next the class started talking about the objects that were pictured on the assigned page: prisms, cylinders, and cones, etc. Mr. H___ then looked at his watch and told the children that they were way behind schedule and had to rush. He gave them an assignment which involved citing examples of the space figures in the world, and he told them they had fifteen minutes for this because the schedule would not allow more. He told them not to talk and to do it correctly. He asked if he had to go around and help anybody, but he didn't seem anxious to do this. Everyone replied in unison, "No," and he said, "Well, very good show." He told them again to keep quiet and asked how many had heard him say this. All hands went up, and he questioned, "Then there will be no more talking?" He told them to sit up straight and said that if any of them continued to slouch, he would have to go around the room and "sit them up straight."

Mr. H___ told the children that, if they were stumped for examples, they could look around the room and find them. He also told them not to show their papers to others, continuing, "Why should you help each other?" He went back to his desk and talked to Miss S___ for a few minutes. Some pupils came up to the desk to ask him about the assignment and received help. Soon, Miss K___ came back to the room to get Mr. H___ for something.

When Mr. H___ had left, the noise increased greatly and many children were out of their seats. One boy was drumming on his desk rather loudly. After a few minutes, Miss S___ went up to the front of the room and told the children it was about time for them to finish. There was a loud protest, and someone said, "No, no. We're not ready to finish, because Mr. H___ told us that we would have an hour for this." Miss S___ had been in the room when Mr. H___ told them that they would have fifteen minutes. Almost immediately after this, Mr. H___ walked back into the room and told the children to clear their desks and put the assignment away. There was no protest, and everybody did it immediately, but there was some noise in the process. Mr. H___ told everybody to "freeze" and complained that there was too much noise. "You know how to change from one subject to another, and it should be as quiet as if there was absolutely no movement in this room at all." He explained that if they didn't know how to change from subject to subject, they would practice for twenty minutes tonight after school until they were quiet. He then told them to "unfreeze" and try it again. The noise continued and, finally, he asked them to take out their health books. They did, and they finally became quiet.

Miss S___ went up to the front of the room and asked everybody to turn to a specific page. When everybody had their books open, she asked them to smile for her. Some people looked at her as if she was crazy, others leered, and some smiled. She repeated the instructions for everybody to smile, saying that she wanted to see their teeth. She explained that they had started the lesson about dental care on Friday and then called on one girl to continue reading about the growth of the teeth. When the girl had read the full paragraph, Miss S___ reviewed the information and asked the children some questions about it. She then called on someone else to read a paragraph and, in the middle of the paragraph, Mr. H___ left. Again the class became noisy while Miss S___ drew a tooth and started to label the various parts. As she was drawing, the children seemed to be mocking the drawing. They asked her what the various parts were, someone said, "Oh, that doesn't look like a tooth," and there were other comments. After the parts had been labeled with the help of the children, they continued reading about dental care.

Throughout the period, the boys on one side of the room were particularly disorderly. As soon as the teacher left the room, they began kicking one another, knocking each other's feet out of the way, etc. Others were throwing spit balls, and other paper projectiles at various individuals in the room. At 11:45, Miss S___ told the patrols to leave, which they did rather hurriedly. After they had left, Miss S___ continued a discussion of wisdom teeth, but it seemed that whatever continuity the lesson had had was now broken. She had great difficulty in keeping the children "with" her. Five minutes later, Mr. H___ re-entered the room, and Miss S___ was still fumbling with this lesson when the observer left.

Observer's Comments: Lunch was rather interesting today. A few of us ate together in the janitor's office, which is the only place where teachers and other staff are allowed to smoke. At first, only Miss S___, Mr. H___, and I were eating with one other teacher, and the conversation seemed centered around the children in the classroom, their problems in the outside world, their socioeconomic backgrounds, and various home problems. Mr. H___ was asked how he felt about observers being in the room and whether or not he had become used to us. He said he felt perfectly free with us and has continued just as he would have had we not been present.

He also mentioned that he didn't feel that the children noticed us anymore. They seemed quite used to having us in the room, just as they were quite used to having strangers in their homes.

Soon after this, Mr. H___ left for lunch patrol. Many teachers strolled in and out, including Mrs. L___, the first grade teacher, who talked about the project. She wanted to know if she would get a copy of the final report. The other observer, who had also come in, assured her that she would. The other first grade teacher, who was also eating with us, seemed quite interested in the project and asked us about it, apparently rather defensive about the whole affair. The rest of the lunch period was occupied with talking to teachers about the backgrounds of the children and the various problems they have in and out of the school setting. One topic that came up involved children falling asleep in class. One teacher told us that it had been a problem in the first grade at the beginning of the year but that the children were not falling asleep any more. We discussed some possible causes of this in the past and present situation.

Briar Hill School
Grade Six
Observer #1

The observer entered the classroom at 9:15 A.M. and took a seat in the rear. Mr. A___ was asking the class if anyone knew the music of Grieg, and two children raised their hands. He went on to tell them that Grieg wrote Peer Gynt. "Oohs" came from various children, seeming to indicate that they were familiar with this music. It also initiated some rather excited conversation. I soon bacame aware that the class was involved in a magazine called "The Junior Scholastic." This magazine is one that Mr. A___ has commented on, saying that it is a very good school magazine and helps him a great deal in Social Studies. During this particular discussion, the class was studying an article about Norway. It was in this connection that music and the writer were being discussed. Mr. A___ went on to tell the class about Norway, pointing out the country on the map and telling them some characteristics of the people. He indicated that most of the people there have blue eyes and went on to say that the percentage of blue eyes in his clsss was much less than would be expected in Norway. In fact, his descriptive phrase was, "It is a blue-eyed country."

Mr. A___ then asked the class how many had blue eyes, and seven children raised their hands. Mr. A___ counted them, writing down the number on the board and then the number of total students in the class underneath it, as a fraction. He indicated that while $\frac{1}{4}$ of the students in this class had blue eyes, many more would have blue eyes in Norway. Mr. A___ said that Walker looked more Norwegian than anyone else in the class because he was fair. Walker responded, "I'm Irish." Mr. A___ said, "That's okay, I'm part Irish, though you wouldn't think it by my name. I'll help you defend being Irish, Walker." During these interchanges, both the students and Mr. A___ seemed to be having a good time. Mr. A___ then said, "Did you hear this story? Once there were two Irish people---(he paused)---now there are lots." The children throughout the classroom chuckled a great deal at Mr. A___'s joke, and then he went back to the topic of Norway. (The joking that Mr. A___ and the students do with one another seems in no way to disrupt their state of affairs or throw them off the general course of the lesson.)

Mr. A___ had a student read further in the magazine, then stopped again to talk about the Vikings. He told the class some background about the Norwegian people and indicated that many of the people in the northern European Countries were of this origin. After spending some time telling about the similarities between English people and people in the Scandinavian countries, he asked if anyone in the room had seen the show, "The Vikings." Several students in the class responded that they had. Mr. A___ said, "It had the greatest Viking of all times in it---Kirk Douglas."

The children laughed at this statement and one of the students in the front of the room said, "I saw the 'Last of the Vikings.'"

Mr. A___ then told the class more about the cultural differences and similarities of the Scandinavian and English people. He had another student read from the magazine which consisted, in part, of words in Old English. As the child attempted to read the Old English, many children in the class and Mr. A___ laughed. He had another student read some of the words in Old English and this brought more chuckles to the classroom. Mr. A___ then said, "Beam must have written this. (Beam is the only Negro boy in the classroom.) He's reading it without any trouble." The class again laughed at this, and Beam also seemed pleased. Mr. A___ said, "If and when you go to college you will probably be required to take English literature and, if you do, you will most likely have to read some of Chaucer." He told them that works by Chaucer were quite often required in English literature and also quite frequently had to be read in Old English. One of the boys in the class said, "Do you have to take English in college?" Mr. A___ said, "Yes, at least I hope it will be required." He then walked to the back of the room. He told them that Chaucer wrote Canterbury Tales and that they might have this in Old English. During this time, Mr. A___ made several comments indicating his enthusiasm and at no time were any of his comments presented from a negative viewpoint. In fact, Mr. A___ was indeed enthusiastic as he was telling the children what they might have to do in the future. The tone of his voice and his manner, plus some of the things he said directly, connoted a great deal of enthusiasm, such as when he said, "I hope it will be required." He would then make other statements indicating how much the student could learn about countries and languages by studying literature.

Mr. A___ moved on to another section in the magazine and proceeded to go down the rows having individual students answer questions. These questions were in the form of sentences, apparently with an underlined word in the sentence and several possible meanings. The student would read the sentence and indicate the correct meaning. During this time there was only one error, and this was made by Shaefer. Shaefer is a blonde girl who usually wears her hair pulled back in a ponytail or perhaps tied with a ribbon. She has a lock of hair combed down over her forehead. (Shaefer is her last name.) I have never heard Mr. A___ refer to her by any other name than Shaefer. Mr. A___ commonly refers to the children, boys and girls alike, by their last names. She quite frequently has her hand in the air and responds to various questions in the class, although she is frequently wrong. During this instance Shaefer read a sentence and gave the answer that she thought was right. When she gave the answer, several children in the class started raising their hands and stretching out of their seats, which seems to be an indication in this class of a wrong answer. Mr. A___, standing at the front of the room, was not totally involved in the situation. The observer was not sure whether he was listening or, perhaps, involved with another student. In any case, he did not hear Shaefer's answer. Shaefer turned around and looked at her peers. Apparently realizing that she had made a mistake, she quickly looked at the question again and gave another answer. Mr. A___ said, "Is that the same answer you gave the first time?" Shaefer replied, "No," and Mr. A___ went on with the next question and the next student.

Mr. A___ next told the class to get ready for the population problems, which consists of working out the percentage increase in population per year in two different countries each day. They get the information needed from one of the previous Junior Scholastics. A large table in the magazine has this information listed along with a great deal of other data. This has been a long-standing assignment for the students. He had two girls each put a problem on the blackboard. The first girl read the figures for one country including the per annum increase. She had very carefully listed the numbers and put the appropriate signs by them. Shaefer, the second girl, proceeded to tell the class about her problem. She had also written her problem on the board very clearly, in much the same manner, except that next to her figures representing the per annum increase were the initials "AP." She read the problem aloud and made several mistakes reading the number, drawing chuckles from the class. Mr. A___ then said, "Read your A and P or P and C." This elicited a great deal of laughter from the class. (Both pairs of initials represent large, chain food stores common in the area.) Mr. A___ took Shaefer's hand and said, "Let me take you where you can see it." He led Shaefer closer to the blackboard and she then read her number to the class. This elicited more laughter from several of the students.

Mr. A___ told the class to put away their papers and get ready for arithmetic. It was now 9:45. During this time, Mr. A___ came to the back of the room, greeted me, and told me that the class was going to have arithmetic for fifteen minutes and would then go to the auditorium to see a movie.

As the class was preparing for the arithmetic lesson, Walker dropped several things underneath his desk. Mr. A___ said, "Having a problem, Walker? Do you need to be changed or something?" The boy responded with something I could not hear. Mr. A___ said, "You looked like you were in distress." The class, including Walker, laughed at this interchange. Mr. A___ opened the lesson by asking, "Anyone remember which problem is next?" They then began going from one student to another down the row giving answers in turn. This procedure went on without much comment from either Mr. A___ or the students until he said, "Read the problem, Shaefer." Shaefer, attempting to respond, had some difficulty getting the answer out in a coherent mnnner. Mr. A___ said, "You're funny, Shaefer. Really funny. I hear you're stubborn, too. Yes, someone who knows you real well told me." Shaefer responded with only the answer to the question, and Mr. A___ continued on down the row with the lesson in much the same manner as before. When coming to another girl in the room, he said, "Look at the one we have for you, sweetie." He then said to a boy whom he had called on for one of the problems, "Oh, come on, I"ll give you one more chance, buddy." The boy laughed and responded with the answer. Mr. A___ indicated to the class that the rest of the assignment would be written. Then he told them to "Pack up your desk. We're going to see a film on the Brazilian jungle." With this remark, Mr. A___ indicated that they should line up at the door and prepare to see the movie.

I accompanied the children to the auditorium, where they immediately gathered in two groups, boys and girls. They sat "Indian style" on the floor in preparation for the film. Mr. A___ set up the projector and started the movie. During this twenty minute period in the auditorium, the students had very little verbal interaction with one another and seemed extremely interested in the film. Mr. A___ left after he started the film and returned just as it was ending. Mr. A___'s class was joined by the other sixth grade class, and the other teacher stayed with the students. There was no discussion before or after the film and the studetns returned to their classroom immediately after it was over. Mr. A___'s only comment to the observer was, "Do you think it will win an Academy Award?" The observer left for the day without returning to the classroom.

Observer's Comments: Mr. A___'s style of dress is particularly casual today. He is by far the most casual teacher of any we are observing. He seldom wears a coat while he is teaching, and the coat that he has is usually hanging over the back of his chair. He commonly wears colored shitts and colored ties and sometimes no tie at all. Today, he is wearing a shirt of various colors along with a tie. This is of particular interest when compared with the sixth-grade classroom in the inner-city school where the teacher always wears a suit and tie. Also, the observer has never seen other teachers without coats.

Mr. A___'s teaching, in general, perhaps needs some additional comment. He seldom gets up in front of the room in a classical sense and teaches to the children. He commonly exchanges verbalizations with them, clarifies things for them, adds additional things to either the lesson, the book, or the children's own comments, and acts as a group leader. In contrast, both of the other sixth-grade teachers we are observing often do rather classical teaching. Mr. H___ routinely describes each concept in several different ways, then checks around the room to see if the students have comprehended it. In addition to this, he frequently drills them. Mrs. D___ commonly uses drill and often spends blocks of time, sometimes fifteen or twenty minutes, with very minute details of the lesson. Mr. A___ seems to take details and the basic acquisition of learning for granted and spends a great deal of time further stimulating the children and moving them deeper into the same concepts. This may turn out to be one of the greatest differences among the settings.

Briar Hill School
Grade Six
Observer #2

The Observers entered Briar Hill School at approximately 1:25 in the afternoon and went to the principal's office to hang up their coats. She asked us if we had obtained any good notes on our last visit. We explained it was difficult but things were coming along quite well, and then we left for our respective classrooms. This was the first time this observer had spent an extended period in Mr. A___'s class. He is the teacher in the sixth grade. As the observer walked into the classroom, some heads turned around, and she went directly to one of the seats in the back of the room. Mr. A___ watched until the observer was seated. The principal had informed us that some of the sixth-grade class was taking Iowa Tests, and the observer was happy to find that the Iowa Tests had been taken in the morning and a class session was in process. As the observer walked in, a girl was giving her report on Argentine gauchos and ranches. She read the report, which took approximately five minutes, and then Mr. A___ called on Gordon to give another report on the economy of Argentina. (Mr. A___ constantly refers to both boys and girls by their last names.)

While the reports were given, the children were very quiet and seemed to be giving their attention to the speaker. One boy was sitting in the back of the room taking an Iowa Test. Gordon's report was marked by many mispronounciations of the Spanish language. At one point he mispronounced Buenos Aires, and Mr. A___ made some fun of this. Another time, a word was mispronounced and another boy who was sitting in the back of the classroom snickered. (The observer noticed throughout the afternoon that is was quite common for Mr. A___ and other members of the class to make fun of mispronounciation and other inadvertently wrong answers children gave.) When Gordon finished his report, Mr. A___ asked him if there was anything he had left out. Mr. A___ then went through a list of items that should have been covered, and everything seemed to be in order. The boy wanted to give credit for the title of his report, "The Economy of Argentina" to Mrs. S___, apparently another teacher in the school. He explained he had planned to entitle his report, "The Agriculture of Argentina," but she had suggested that the word "Economy" would encompass everything. In an apparently derisive tone, Mr. A___ remarked, "Yes, it would be an all-inclusive type of thing."

It was now 1:30, and Mr. A___ asked the boys to please stand up to go to gym. They all stood up, then some of them told him that gym peroid was at two o'clock because the schedule was different on Thursday than it was on Tuesday. Mr. A___ checked the schedule, found that gym was at two, and asked the boys to please sit down again. When they were seated, Mr. A___ said, "Well, Shaefer had a report on the "Clothing, Food, and Implements of Argentina.'" Shaefer turned out to be a girl. She walked over to the desk and tried to whisper something about her report to Mr. A___, but he did not allow this private communication. The girl said there was not too much information about clothing in Argentina, and he said, "What do you mean? Don't they use much clothing in Argentina?" The class burst out laughing. She also said that she couldn't find out much about the food that they ate, and he asked, "Well, doesn't everybody eat hamburgers? There is so much meat there that they must eat hamburgers."

The girl began her report on dancing and clothing in Argentina and, if there was a mispronounciation or something that sounded a little odd, the class would start laughing. Mr. A___ interrupted to ask if anyone could tell him the difference between Spanish and Argentine music, and many people guessed about the instruments and the language used. Finally, he said, "No, it is the difference in the rhythm from one country to another. A trained ear can tell which music is from Peru and which is from Columbia, etc." The girl finished her talk, and Mr. A___ went to the back of the room to check on the boy taking the Iowa Test.

A messenger came into the room and gave Mr. A___ a message to read to the class about Cub Scouts. He read the message and asked if there was anybody under ten in the class. The children said that only one boy in the classroom was under ten, and he was already a Cub. Mr. A___ said he wasn't really a Cub, because bear cubs were larger than he.

The boy who was sitting in the back of the room was sent to the office to continue the test because it was getting too noisy in the classroom. Mr. A___ told him to stay there half an hour and that he would trust him to end it in the alloted time. Immediately after this, another boy gave a report covering the population of Argentina. He told of the density of the population in various areas. While the boy was doing this, Mr. A___ was returning other assignments done by the girls in the classroom. After the boy had finished his report, Mr. A___ asked some pertinent questions about the relative populations in Syracuse and in New York City to clear up some of the terms that the boy had used. Then a girl gave a report on fiestas in Argentina and, following this, the class had a brief lesson on the derivation of the word "fiesta" and its relation to the English word "feast."

The boy who had been talking about the population map interrupted the class with some statistics about the population concentration in New York State, and the class went on again to talk about various densities in population. Mr. A___ gave some examples, such as the concentration of people working in the Empire State Building. All the class seemed to be impressed and even amazed at the statistics. Soon after this, the girl was allowed to continue her report on the fiestas and, while she was reporting, Mr. A___ kept looking at some records. When she had completed her report, he put on some music that he said was typical of Argentina or other Latin American countries. Some of the songs were of love and quite a few of the boys started giggling. They were asked to listen to the instruments and to identify them. After the fiesta songs had been played, Mr. A___ asked the girl if she had completed her report, and she said that she had not. She then took out a large scroll like piece of paper and, with the help of two other girls, unwound it to show various pictures of countries in Latin America. Mr. A___ seemed really impressed by this and, when she started unrolling it, he asked her what it was. He received his answer from many of the boys and girls in the classroom who called out with some signs of distaste that she had already done this type of thing before, in the fifth grade. Mr. A___ commented that he enjoyed the originality of the idea and mentioned it to the girl again later in the morning.

It was now 1:57, and the boys were asked to get in line for gym. There was some pushing and shoving in the back of the room as they marched out. The girls then put everything away and prepared for a library lesson in the room. This lesson continued for about half an hour while the boys were in gym class. One girl was the librarian and called children in various rows, asking them to bring back books that they had taken out. Then she called the rows again to ask if they would like to take out other books. They were quiet during this half hour. They kidded each other once in a while and spoke to each other for short stretches of time, but they were mostly absorbed in the activity.

During this period, Mr. A___ began to walk around the room doing odds and ends. He also came over and talked to the observer. He first asked to see the observer's notes and, when I would not let him do this, he asked what was in them. I explained that I was looking at the interaction of the boys and girls and would just write down minute-by-minute happenings as I saw them. He then started talking about the class and explained that it was a very self-sufficient group and that he would rely on them to do things very much on their own. The observer and Mr. A___ talked about a budding language program that had started in the fourth grade which had been discontinued, and then we talked about the program of studies in the sixth grade. Further conversation concerned the Social Studies units which the children were expected to cover in the sixth grade, and then Mr. A___ got up and walked over to do some work at his desk. He asked one girl to finish an Iowa Test that she had not completed, and the others read silently or worked on their projects. I noticed that one girl was memorizing a poem which she had to have ready for the next day.

At about 2:30, a janitor walked in to check the slide projector and record player, and he and Mr. A___ became engaged in a quiet conversation. After about five to ten minutes, it ended on a jovial note, and Mr. A___ came back to talk to me again. He seemed to be more cheerful this time and spoke about Syracuse. He told me that he hated it and mentioned that he was from New York City. We began talking about New York and about movies. He wanted to know my opinion about the ones that were playing in town. The conversation continued until the boys returned. Mr. A___ explained that "The Wahilis are back with their swords above their heads" and excused himself, in order that he "could go back and perform again."

When the boys had taken their drinks and were seated, he asked them to take out their Social Studies notebooks. The class went over two homework questions about Argentina that had been assigned the day before. When the children read the questions and their answers, he would ask further questions. After one answer had been read, Mr. A___ would call on others to add to it. One of the questions had something to do with the shipment of refrigerated meats from Argentina to other parts of the world, and a discussion followed about Argentine meat. He indicated that it was supposed to be quite good. One boy raised his hand and said that he had eaten some Argentine lamb chops the night before, and a discussion ensued about how expensive the particular restaurant had been. It seemed, however, that many of the children had eaten there. Mr. A___ then told a story about Japanese beef farms in which they pamper the beef and even massage the steers so their meat would be very tender. He explained that these meats were sold only to very expensive restaurants, and throughout the story the boys and girls giggled at the idea of coddling steers.

At three o'clock Mr. A___ gave the class an assignment for the next day, and then he asked a boy to deliver a report about the nature of life. The boy walked over to Mr. A___ to ask him a question, and I noticed that Mr. A___ was staring out the window. The boy had to repeat his question. A girl raised her hand and asked Mr. A___ if they should take notes. He said, "Well, make up your mind and do what you think is best." Nearly everybody took out their notebooks to take notes.

The boy began his report with the concept of an all-creating G-d and Mr. A___ went back to his desk and started eating some candy or nuts. The boy explained about the amoeba and gave a very rough explanation of cell mitosis; it was not entirely accurate but was not corrected by Mr. A___. The boy went on to explain what he called the Nitrogen-Carbon exchange. This helps to support life and operates through plants and animals serving complimentary functions. It was not explained very well, and Mr. A___ asked the boy to explain it in his own words. The report was full of small sections concerning conditions by which life can be explained. One of the sections concerned atmosphere and the boy noted that, if we didn't have atmosphere, we would burn, freeze, and be hit by meteors. Mr. A___ commented that it sounded like a Syracuse winter, and with this the class again broke into an uproar.

Throughout the report, other points were pulled out of context by Mr. A___ and joked about. At one point, the boy started naming some vitamins and said he could name a hundred but he didn't want to. There were a great many giggles in the classroom, and Mr. A___ corrected him by saying that there were not a hundred vitamins. Mr. A___ then got up from his seat and walked back to where the observer was sitting and told her a joke. She laughed, and he went back to his seat.

It was almost 3:30 when Mr. A___ told the children to put everything away, as it was the end of the day. The boy's patrol went outside, and Mr. A___ reminded the others about talking before 3:30 when school would be let out. As the boys and girls were putting their things away, the observer left the room.

Observer's Comments: The observer would like to mention a few things noticed about this classroom. First of all, as suggested throughout this report, the children seemed hostile to one another and were very quick to poke fun and jump on mistakes made by their peers. It seemed that the children were in competition with each other to find out who could give the answer first. Mr. A___ didn't do anything to stop this and even contributed to it through his sarcastic remarks directed toward errors or incorrect answers.

The observer couldn't help but notice what seemed to be a distracted attitude in Mr. A___. His frequent looks toward the clock, remarks about going to "perform," and gazing out the window while children were talking to him, seemed to support this feeling. Mr. A___ also appeared to be disinterested in many cases when the children were giving reports. He does work at his desk or, in one case, eats, or hands out papers, and hardly pays attention to what is going on. It seems that the children have adapted some of this attitude when listening and are not really "with" the class. Probably more time with this class will clarify some of these conceptions, either confirming or disproving them.

A great many of the children in the class were wearing sneakers. This does not seem to mean anything in itself but, because of the middle-class nature of the neighborhood, the observer suspected that this was a fad or a style of dress that everyone was following.

Brookville School
Grade Six
Observer #1

I entered the classroom at 2 P.M. and took a chair toward the back of the room. Mrs. D___ was working with four students in the front. I could not hear clearly what was going on but it appeared that she was drilling them in some kind of a phonics lesson. Then I noticed that they were taking turns reading aloud from some books they held in their hands. The other children in the room seemed to be taking some kind of test; apparently, these four children were not involved in the same activity. After a few minutes Mrs. D___ told the children who were taking the tests to put away their dictionaries. About half of the children then started to close dictionaries, take them to the side of the room, and place them on a shelf. Mrs. D___ commented that this was a test and that they were not supposed to look at the dictionaries. (I inferred that the test was almost over and that some children had been using the dictionaries all along.) Mrs. D___ explained to the children that she was attempting to find out what they knew on their own and that having the dictionaries would not allow this. Several children had been asking her about certain words and other children (who were also taking the test) had raised their hands and responded. At 2:30, Mrs. D___ told them to pass their tests toward the front of the room.

Apparently still talking about one of the words one of the children brought up (although I could not gain any clarity on this), she asked the children to tell her what a myth was. One boy attempted to answer, describing it as a story and illustrating it by telling about Mount "Edna." Mrs. D___ laughed at this and was joined by the children, after which Mrs. D___ said, "Etna." She then asked the class where the word vulcanized came from, and several students indicated that it came from the word volcano.

The next happenings in the class seemed to be in the nature of science, as Mrs. D___ was talking to the class about the earth's crust. She said that the earth had a "what--?" None of the children in the class responded. Then Mrs. D___ asked, "What does an

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[1] Observer's Comment: As Donald was attempting to clarify what a myth was, which apparently came out of an entire area of class discussion which is unclear to me, many children in the class put their hands in the air whenever he hesitated. It was as though the children in the class were waiting for one of their peers to make a mistake so they would get a chance to be "correct" themselves. The entire lesson seemed rather confused to me, although I am not sure whether this was because I came in in the middle or not.

apple have?" There was still no response, and Mrs. D___ said, "It has a core, doesn't it?" She then went to the board and drew something, telling the class that it was a pie. She said that "Pies have layers, and they also have a "what--?" Several children responded, "crust." Mrs. D___ went on to tell the class that the earth had top soil that has, "the good stuff in it." She then said, "Over at our place we have hardpan, and when they tried to dig a well they ran into that stuff--what? (no response)--can't build--what?--what am I thinking of--quick sand." She proceeded to tell the children about digging near her house. "He hit a cross vein where there was plenty of H_2O," she said. "He used one of those divining rods and, right where the pull was the greatest, he went through the layers to the water." Mrs. D___ continued to tell the children about the layers of earth. "Coal, what are you burning when you burn coal?" One of the children responded, "Wood." Mrs. D___ then said, "Paper."

She next asked, "Who would like to do an experiment?" Several children responded, and Mrs. D___ selected a boy and a girl who were near the front of the room. She put several books edge to edge and asked the children to push them together. She then said, "What's happening?" (No response) "What's happening?" At this point a child I could not identify said, "Pressure." Mrs. D___ said "Pressure from where? And something's got to what?" In unison the children said, "Give." Mrs. D___ continued, "And the only place it can go is...?" The response, in unison, "Up." Mrs. D___ asked the two children who had helped to take their seats and said that perhaps two others would like to do it. She selected two boys who went through very nearly the same procedure.

Mrs. D___ then went back to her desk, retrieved a National Geographic Magazine, and said, "One of our new states, what?" The class responded in unison, "Alaska." She went on to tell the children that here were some pictures of the Alaskan earthquake. In a dramatic voice, she said, "That's what happened--the earth cracked right there and dropped to nothing. Houses, stores, everything tipped like this (illustrating with her hands that the earth had changed position), hanging. Then the water comes in like this," she continued. During this time, she was showing the children a flooded area that was illustrated in the magazine. She then said to the children, "Have you ever had a truck passing by the school building that shook the school room like in our old school building?" The children responded in unison, "Yes." Then she said, "Does our earth's surface change?" And the children responded in unison, "Yes." Mrs. D___ then said, "It surely does." It was 3 P.M., and I left the room for the day.

Brookville School
Grade Six
Observer #2

I entered the room of Mrs. D___, the sixth-grade teacher, at 1 P.M., as the children were coming from a study hall after lunch. Mrs. D___ started to erase the blackboard and then gave some instructions about the lesson that was to follow. She told the youngsters with the sixth-grade readers to start a story about Pecos Bill. She asked the children if they knew anything about Pecos Bill, and one reply was that the stories were not fiction. Mrs. D___ asked what non-fiction meant and finally accepted the answer that, "not one ounce of it is true."

It was about 1:10, and Mrs. D. started reading the story and asked the children with the fifth-grade readers to please change their seats and come to the front of the room. This they did by displacing a few of the children who were already sitting there. The other children started working on their own while Mrs. D___ talked to the group in front about a story they had read the previous day. She bombarded them with a great number of comprehension questions, asking them about what had happened in the story and who each character was. When the answer was not right, she asked the children to please open the book and find what the right answer was. Thus, they went over the story step by step. Most of the questions seemed very elementary. At times the group had trouble answering but finally located the correct answer in the book. The story was about a skunk, and a discussion about various types of animals followed. Mrs. D___ told the children about a rural school where she had taught for a few years, and the types of pets that they had kept in the room. This lasted for about fifteen minutes, after which Mrs. D___ told the children to go back to their original seats.

She wrote a number of words on the board. The group read them aloud from their seats, pronouncing all fifteen words twice. Mrs. D___ told them to take out a piece of paper and write the numbers one to fifteen. Then she read them sentences to be filled in with the correct word response. Each sentence was read twice, and the children were given ample time to fill in the correct answers. Mrs. D___ was not very consistent in the way she indicated a blank was to be filled in. She said, "Hm-m," or "blank," or "such and such." Even the observer was puzzled as to where the filled-in words were supposed to go. After they had gone through all fifteen blanks, Mrs. D___ went over the entire list again, re-reading each sentence so the children would again have time to correct those they might have gotten wrong.

It was now after 1:30, and Mrs. D___ went back to the children who had been reading the story of Pecos Bill on their own. She asked them some questions about the outcome of the story first and, as one of the major portions of the story had to do with a bustle, she went on to explain what a bustle was, how it was worn, and what it looked like. She told the children that this story could be classified in the realm of American folklore, something like the Greek myths they would be studying later on. Mrs. D___ then asked more questions about the story, including what was "different" about the wedding that was presented there. One boy answered that there were horses at the wedding party, and Mrs. D___ commented that, indeed, some men feel they are being led to the "halter" when they get married. The class did not get the joke, but Mrs. D___ looked around at me, saw me smiling, and realized she had one person in the audience who appreciated it. Soon after this, Mrs. D___ asked one little boy for a synopsis of the story and had him start by telling the beginning event. One after another, she called on children to continue. I noticed that these children talked very slowly and with a great deal of hesitation. Although they were not very fluent, Mrs. D___ was quite patient in waiting for them to finish.

It was now about ten minutes to two o'clock, and the children were told that they would be doing some work in the workbook tomorrow and were asked to clear their desks. Mrs. D___ asked someone to read a sign that was on a table at the side of the room, "What makes sound?" Then she asked for a definition of sound, and someone said "vibration." She asked, "What is a vibration?" She couldn't get a good answer to this, even though the class had discussed it previously (at a time when I was there.) Mrs. D___ took a ruler, held part of it down on the desk, and vibrated the part extended in the air. She did this with different lengths of the ruler extended over the edge. Then she asked the children what their conclusion was about the relationship between the amount of the ruler extended and the vibration. Individual children tried to figure out what the relationship was and were asked to demonstrate it even though they couldn't verbalize it. Finally, it came out that the vibration was related to the pitch, and the correct relationship was explained.

Mrs. D___ then asked the children if they were wondering why they were looking at a blank bulletin board. She had covered up one on the left hand wall of the room, and she dramatically uncovered it showing two ears. She asked the children if they knew what the outer ear was for, and no one could give an adequate answer. Mrs. D___ preceeded to demonstrate the use of the outer ear. She asked the children to pull their ears back and to listen to themselves and others talk. Then she asked them to pull their ears forward and listen that way. She asked if they heard a difference, and they all agreed that they did. She asked them why there was a difference. Some tried to guess the answer and, finally, the question, "How does sound travel?" was asked.

"Sound travels in waves to the ear." After this was resolved, Mrs. D___ went on to another topic related to sound. She asked the children how many ears they had, and they said two and looked at her in amazement. Somebody answered four but didn't really seem to know why. Mrs. D___ finally said, "Well, you have six ears and don't you look funny?" Then they all turned around and started laughing.[1]

Mrs. D___ then asked the children if they had seen any old movies where a man used a long funnel in his ear to hear better. She described this horn-like device used by the deaf to funnel in more sound and talked about its use before the hearing aid. Then Mrs. D___ went on to imitate an old New England type farmer with his funnel in his ear, the characterization being complete with walk, regional accent, and "By cracky" interjections. The children seemed quite amused. The lesson continued about sound and vibration as I left the school for the day.

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[1] Observer's Comment: I noticed many times that when Mrs. D___ would joke, children would turn around to see if I was laughing at the same joke, then turn back quickly and continue with the lesson.

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE "IDEAL PUPIL" RESPONSES

Following are sample responses to the first three "Ideal Pupil" questions from each of the three schools. They have been selected to illustrate the range of responses in each setting and are presented as the children submitted them, with errors, crossing out, etc., intact. Items Four and Five are not included because they seemed to add little of significance to the overall picture.

Separate pages presenting each of the three items are devoted to Downtown, Briar Hill, and Brookville Schools, respectively. The pupil code numbers identify responses so that the reader can compare the responses of a particular child on two or all three of the items. In other words, for example, any responses from Downtown School numbered "9" were contributed by the same child. In some cases, of course, only one or two of a particular child's responses were chosen for presentation here, and some children are not represented at all.

Downtown School

Question One: What kind of a student is he or she? How does he act?

3. He a creepy studnd..

Stupid
anything
4. He just don't do ~~athing~~ roung
~~other~~

5. a good student
sometimes like shes all it

7. He's a good boy he act peuty good

9. She is a very quiet, intelligent girl. She isn't shy, but she doesn't talk until spoken to.

12. She is a good student she act's alright
pay's attention to what the teacher's telling her. She act's alright in some way's she acts mean and misable. But she act's o.k. otherwards.

20. Great kid. Act okay in school. But at home you should see her.

27. He obeys rules of all kinds listens when someone else is speaking, and is kind to everyone, man or animal.

28. He is very nice person he doesn't get into trouble with the teachers. He is is very respectful sto the people around him.

30. She can learn something easily it doesn't have to be explained to her. She doesn't horse around or go around with the wrong people.

32. These persons are studives, get their work done, make good reports and projects. These persons are not bullies, but try to be friends with all.

35. she is a kind student she act very well to

Downtown School

Question Two: If he learns well, tell me what he does in the classroom that helps him do this.

---

1. He gets to be a good friend to the teacher and then the teacher dovn the rest.

4. He keep is big mouth shet and pay a action

8. She pay antion.

10. She studies alot. She can remember things so easily.

11. 1. In all her free time she studies the work that she doesn't know.
    2. And she also listen when the teacher is teaching something.
    3. If she doesn't know the work she askes the teacher.

14. S he smart and dress well
    S he have very good freind
    S he tell lot of good Story.

19. He reads a lot of book and he pay's attention.

23. Well he allways listens to any question the teacher asks. He helps around the class room.

25. He thinks.

28. He listens very carefully and when he doesn't understand something he asks questions about that certain thing until he understands it and then wastes no time in doing it as best as he can.

29. He listens to the teachers.
    He reads a lot about math and other stuff.
    He goes for extra points on tests.

31. In the class he learns well by listening attentively.
    By asking questions he does not understand and often if he doesn't understand to well he will take his book home and study.

32. He is attenettful, askes questions, gives his Idiis and doesn't talk out loud or fool around

35. she study in her spare time

Downtown School

Question Three: Is he liked by most other students? If so, why?
If not, why?

---

1. No
   He acts to big

3. he a ~~stub~~

   stufed
   shirt

6. Yes she is liked by other students
   Why because she doesn't fight she is a nice student.

8. Yes Because she like everybody

9. I believed she is well liked by most pupils in the classroom.
   I seemed to like her quite well.

14. yes

    S he dose not stay out late at nigh
    S he be in by 9:o clack

17. No She is diffrent from everyone even me.
    She just to smart. It's unbeleaveable.

18. Yes

    She never starts any troubly.

23. Yes he is liked by other students, because he freindly and very comical same times.

25. Yes; Because he is smart he can fight and he looks ok.

29. No Because the other students think he talks to much and that he is to smart.

31. Hewwill be liked by most of the students, because he is friendly and patient. But some of the students who do not do as well in school will not like him because they think he is to smart.

33. Yes, because she makes friends fast and doesn't act like she knows it all.

35. yes she is liked by other students
    Why because she is intelegent

37. He is liked my most of the students
    Because he helps every one in the the and is kind to every one.

Briar Hill School

Question One: What kind of a student is he or she? How does he act?

---

1. This student acts nicely on to others. He doesn't disobey the teacher alot like some other students. He's very friendly and kind. He doesnt tease you if you get a bad mark.
Your smartness doesn't matter to him.

3. He seems to know everything he has to.
He answers questions ~~ther~~ thourally.
He has a balanced sence of humor.
He can do most things right.

13. A perfect student you could not be found anyplace in the world. This student that I am talking about is 12 years old and has fully matured. Now this student is always polite (pulls out chairs for girls, etc.) never talks out of turn and never will swear or use vulgar language when something happens to him. If this student can do this he could be the ideal person in school and society.

18. My Ideal student is someone who gets average marks + doesn't bother anyone.

19. An ideal student to me would be a student that behaved pretty well in class. He or she wouldn't be perfect, he might talk a little in class, and get yelled at sometimes, but he would be liked by the teacher.

    As a student he would have to listen and learn. He would make sure assignments were in on time, and try to do the best he could. He'd make some mistakes, ~~can~~ careless ones, and ones he didn't know, because he's not perfect.

20. My ideal student would be the type that both the teachers and the kids get alongwith well. He would be smart, but not know positivly everything. He wouldn't be so perfect he did nothing wrong. He would act sort of modest, but not so modest like he wanted compliments or needed encourgement. If someone asked him for an(~~question~~) answer on a test he would not give it to him no matter how good a friend he was. He also would not ask for the answer from somebody else. It also might be helpful to have a good sense of humor and "be able to take it."

22. Well he's a average 6 grde student. Acts not to bad, like he knows every thing. But he nice to talk to, and play with. He's nice to get along with.

23. I think an ideal student is one who listens attentively in class keeps quiet but asks questions that he wants to know. I think he would help people if they need help. I think he would have all his work done before doing anything else. He would take care of other peoples property and that sort of thing.

28. My kind of ideal student is very very bright. He or she is not an "egghead", nor is a dope. He is not rough and is kind to everyone. He is not a genious. This student is not a goody-goody or an annoyance. He is just an average American boy.

Briar Hill School

Question Two: If he learns well, tell me what he does in the classroom that helps him do this.

---

1. He listens very closely every time the teacher talks or somebody gives a report. Before tests he takes notes and studies hard. He does a lot of reports and maps and charts. He's a good reader and reads alot in front of the class.

9. He works hard and does a lot of research in many book and from many people as well. (lectures; etc.) He does his homework and doesn't Watch the "boob-tube" (television) very much.

10. To learn well he must try to concentrate and penatrate what the teacher is saying. He should always go over something he doesn't understand with the teacher and he should do all assignments that are assigned because that wouldn't be given unless they were to help you learn. He should always do more research on the topic because your teacher can't tell you everything. He should have his own ideas about things and even if the teacher thinks different.

13. In learning this student studie's from morning till night. His daily [illegible] schedul go like this: AM. Wake up, 6, go to school 8:30, Eat lunch 12:00, P.M. 3:00 go to religious school, 6:00 dinner, 7:00 homework with no T.V. and 2:00 bed. If anybody could do this he would have so much knolage that he would be perfect and could stop all world problems.

16. (1) He or she completes the assignments fully understanding the information found out. (2) Understands questions completely before attempting to answer (3) listens attentitively when instructor or some other authorative person is speaking (4) gets all the information pratical or available

18. He studiessand tries his best. He goes to books for imformation.

19. The ideal student would learn well, because he would have to have a good teacher, and listen to that teacher.
He would use reference books, and not do questions skimily because he would like school. I think the ideal student would learn well, and go over what he learned every night so that he wouldn't have to cram for a test the night before it's given.
This student would not be a straight a student every period.

20. Well, first of all he has to listen intently. He must ask a lot of questions, because when you ask ~~many~~ good, sensable questions it shows that you are thinking. My teacher said the more you learn the more ignorant you are, which is really true, because as you learn you relise how much you didn't know, and you want to learn more and more. This student whould have this attitude and this would help him learn. He also tries to learn what he doesn't understand instead of moping about it.

22. He has a big vocabulary, and probaly likes science. and keeps on doing reports, and answere questions complete. I'm sure he will pass 6 grde and on up. He reads some stories that will help in 6 grade. and finds out what teadhers ask completly. Like he dose not just to half of it.

28. He listens. This as well as other things makes him ideal. Always you'll find him with a book or work. Never doing nothing! He tries to make extra reports or charts that will help him with his grade.

Briar Hill School

Question Three: Is he liked by most other students? If so, why? If not, why?

---

1. Yes he is. Because he's so friendly and is willing to answer a question that you don't understand. He's a good kid to fool around with in school and at home. Kids like him because he's willing to talk at all times. He likes to talk about records and so do I. We sometimes talk about movies.

3. Yes because he does not brag. He does not cheat or start arguments. (usually)

10. He does not have to be liked by all students but should have friends. He does not have to like everyone but be able to hold his temper with those he dislikes. Being able to be friendly with anyone I think is very important.

14. Yes. Because as I have told you she acts friendly etc. and is pretty. But sometimes you do not like her because boys like her alot-she can do everything!

18. He would be liked by others
because he doesn't show-off + bother people

19. I think he would be liked by most other students because he would treat them fairly, even if he did not especially. He wouldn't have a very quick temper.

    Students would like him because he would not act like a show off. He wouldn't brag about his marks.

    The only students who would not like him are those who are jealous. He wouldn't need friends like that anyhow.

20. The ideal student should be liked by most of ~~the~~ his classmates. This is because he doesn't "show off". He is "normal" and doesn't have an urge to figure out how many square inches are in the gym floor and the perfet angle to the exact degree you have to stand to make a basket. This is also important to his grades. The kids would have to know him and he would have to know how to get along with others. He is friendly and doesn't snub anybody because they are not as smart as he is.

22. Yes because he knows all up todate dances and records. ~~Ge~~ Goes play what they play. He handsome and nice to talk to.

23. I think he would be liked by other students. If he was smart he might show it in school but not go bragging about to other children. He would try to make friends with other children.

25. "She is liked by most other students because she ~~dees~~ dosn't act "HIGH and ~~MI~~ MIGHTY". She keeps friends also. This is because, once she has made a friend she should still be nice as if trying to get the person to be friends. (~~Howevers~~) However, she gets along well.

28. Yes! Little or big students alike. He is ~~/~~ very friendly. Much admiration is put toward him. He likes things most students do. Records, groups, girls, sports, cars, (ect.)

Brookville School

Question One: What kind of a student is he or she? How does he act?

---

1. He is the kind of student that is always studing in his work. If the teacher told about something he didn't know about he would look it up.

   He has very good manners and he always tries to make people happy when they are sad.

3. He is a very intagent boy he act as does he is a breant student if I could be lake him. Well one thing in gymasijam he does the beast. And he act as does he knows everything and he does in may way.

6. He is a good person he act rigth in the school room.

10. She is a well mannered and courteous child. She minds the teacher and does very good work. She acts very friendly and when someone is having difficulty, she helps them.

13. She is a neat well be have person
    She acts aller that then she already is.
    good mannors
    neatness

16. He is a very smart and nice person. He doesn't act smart and talk back. When he talks to the teacher knows just what to say.

21. She is a very nice grill. She act like she deosn't no anything.

23. He know's every thing and he works as hard as he can. He acts quickly and doesn't say a thing not in less the teacher ask him something.

Brookville School

Question Two: If he learns well, tell me what he does in the classroom that helps him do this.

---

1. He reads everything that is new to him and he hardly ever misses school.

2. It helps him to do this because when the teacher is talking he gets down in his mind what he thinks he or she is talking about. If he doen't understand then he asks the teacher about the one part he doesn't understand, so the next time he will know it.

3. He alls take a lot of books home and when he has a spray time he goes back to work and does every little thing when theirs nothing to doew he reads.

4. He reads a good deal and learns all he can about the subject. When ~~ss~~ he is cann't punauch the word he looks it up in the diconary.

6. He ken read good because he read a book.

8. She reads very good. Spliting words into syllables, and prouncing words.

10. She goes to the back of the room and she gets an encyclopedia or dictionary. Sometimes she uses her text books or asks the teacher for help. She also uses the globe.

12. He learns well because he studies all the time and if he doesn't know something he will ask the teacher.

13. She learns very well
she put all thing off her desk when the teachers
are talking she p~~l~~ays good atenshon

14. Well in Social Studies he pays attention and doesn't fool around. When he is done he studies and sometimes takes notes.

18. This person is good at everything and what helps him is by listening and ~~tso~~ studies very much.

Brookville School

Question Three: Is he liked by most other students? If so, why? If not, why?

---

1. He is liked by almost everyone in the class. He is liked because he treats everyone kind and with good manners.

3. Yes he is liked by all of the students. And why he is like is because he helps everyone like on the bus I didn't no what to do and how to do it so he help me.

4. At the lunch room they ~~sp~~ setting to getter and tolk and eat, at the calls room if he needs more help on a subject he will go over ~~s~~ and help.

6. The people in the room like him because is kind.

7. Yes he is liked by all the students in the class, because ~~x~~ he is fun to be with and laphes a lot.

12. Yes he is liked by other students because he doesn't go around saying how smart he is, he is very friendly.

13. No She is the only one why because
She hates boy and the auther don't

19. Yes he is liked. Becouse he isn't so brassy as a few people who act as if these special and don't want anything to do with anybody else.

22. I like him very much but others don't because he is very stuborn amd has a bad temper.

APPENDIX C

"SCHOOL DAYS"

The following article is based on the sixth grade data from the project reported here. It is scheduled to appear, after further revision, as a chapter in Among the People: Studies of the Urban Poor, edited by Irwin Deutscher and Elizabeth Thompson (New York: Basic Books, forthcoming).

School Days

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Among the requirements imposed on young people in our society is formal education, usually through the public schools. Such phrases as "universal free education" may obscure the fact that school is often a different experience in different classrooms, schools, and areas. "Common sense" and our own educational experience confirm the existence of such differences on an idiosyncratic basis. One teacher may seem "harder," "nicer," or "better" than another. Some schools appear more friendly and relaxed than others, some school systems maintain higher academic standards than others, and the like.

We might also expect to find characteristics that tend to be common to inner-city or slum schools in contrast to schools in more "privileged" urban or suburban neighborhoods, and rural schools seem likely to be different from both. Many observations have, in fact, been made to the effect that slum schools tend to be dirty, overcrowded, largely custodial institutions where most pupils "do their time" without learning much. Suburban schools are frequently characterized as tense and highly competitive. The movement toward consolidation of rural schools reflects the observation that they tend to be too small to provide adequate educational resources and stimulation. It seems worth asking whether such apparent differences are real and, real or not, the extent to which they are reflected in the ways teachers and pupils alike perceive school and its expectations. Some recent, tentative findings in this area are reported below, along with hypotheses about possible consequences for youngsters in school.

The project was undertaken as an observational pilot study of one first and one sixth grade class at each of three schools serving an "inner city," a suburban, and a rural district, respectively. The discussion that follows is based on preliminary work in the sixth grade classes only. For several months, the two participant observers made frequent, independent visits to the classrooms involved and recorded their observations in depth. In addition, it was felt that an indication of how pupils and teachers perceived the setting and its demands could be obtained from their own descriptions of a (real or imaginary) "ideal pupil" in their classroom. Therefore, each student in the sixth grade classes studied was asked to respond in writing to the following five questions about his concept of the "ideal" or "perfect" student in his class:

1. What kind of student is he or she? How does he act?
2. If he learns well, tell me what he does in the classroom that helps him do this.
3. Is he liked by most other students? If so, why? If not, why?
4. Do you think he was this way when school started this year, or has he improved as the year has gone along? Explain.

5. How many students in this class are like the student you are describing, if any?

The teachers responded, also in writing, to questions that were essentially similar but with appropriate differences in wording. These "essays," along with the observational data and background material from school records, provided the basis for the material that follows.[1]

Downtown Elementary and Briar Hill Elementary (all names are pseudonyms) are both part of the same medium-sized urban school system, but Downtown is many years old or older and serves a predominantly lower-class, inner-city population while Briar Hill is almost new and serves an affluent neighborhood on the edge of the city. Brookville Elementary School is located about thirty miles away in a small, rural community. Of course, since only one classroom representing each "condition" was studied, idiosyncratic factors related to school or classroom may have influenced the results. It was felt, however, that this exploratory effort was warranted to help guide future study of the situations faced by pupils and teachers in inner-city, suburban, and rural school settings.

Information available from school records demonstrates that pupils' backgrounds, apparent ability, and achievement differed predictably in the three schools.[2] Table One summarizes

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[1] More extensive and systematic reports of these data will be made later.

[2] It is interesting to note that pupil records at Briar Hill are virtually complete, while there are numerous gaps at both Downtown and Brookville. If one can assume that the gaps tend to represent less favorable scores (more frequent absences, inadequate information from the home, etc.), then the real differences may be greater than those reflected in Table One.

Table 1

Background Data on Pupils by School and Class--Sixth Grades

Variable	Measure	Downtown School	Brookville School	Briar Hill Class Studied	Briar Hill Class Not Studied	All Briar Hill Sixth Grade
Age	N	38	22	28	28	56
	Median	11-2	11-3	10-7	10-6.5	10-7
	I.Q.R.[e]	13.5 mo.	16 mo.	5 mo.	9 mo.	8 mo.
I.Q.[a]	N	31	23	27	28	55
	Median	90	97	131	109	122
	I.Q.R.[e]	29.5	21.75	10.5	18	23
Achievement[b]	N	28	23	25	27	52
	Median	5.4	6.3	8.3	7.4	7.8
	I.Q.R.[e]	2.2	1.84	.64	3.64	1.2
Parents' Education (Years)[c]	N	34	12	28	25	53
	Median	12	11	16	16	16
	I.Q.R.[e]	4	4	0	4	4
Parents' Occupation Score[d]	N	28	21	25	27	52
	Median	18.5	8	78	51	68
	I.Q.R.[e]	17	22.75	35.75	37	37

Note. No significance figures have been computed because it is not intended that the data presented be generalized beyond the particular populations studied. See Robert L. Merton, G. G. Reader, and Patricia L. Kendall, eds. *The Student Physician: Introductory Studies in the Sociology of Medical Education* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1957), pp. 301-305; H. C. Selvin, "A Critique of Tests of Significance in Survey Research," *American Sociological Review*, 1957, 22, 519-527.

[a] Intelligence test scores were based on the California Test of Mental Maturity in Downtown and Briar Hill Schools and on the Henmon-Nelson Test of Mental Ability in Brookville School.

[b] Iowa Test of Basic Skills for all schools; however, the tests were administered in the Fall at Downtown and Briar Hill Schools and the following Spring at Brookville School, so it may be assumed that the Brookville scores are artificially inflated relative to the other two. Composite scores are presented here; only minor variations were noted in the score patterns on sub-tests.

[c] Years of education for the parent with more education.

[d] For the parent with the higher status occupation. Parental occupations were scored according to the Socioeconomic Index developed by Otis Dudley Duncan and presented in Albert J. Reiss, Jr., *Occupations and Social Status* (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1961).

[e] Inter-Quartile Range

available data on age, intelligence test scores, achievement test scores, and parental education and occupation. Gross differences between Briar Hill and the other two schools are immediately evident.[3] It seems apparent that pupils at Downtown and Brookville are less able, are being educated less effectively, or both, at least in terms of the goals implicit in the test scores reported. Further attention will be given below to the apparent goals and motivation of schools and pupils as well as to questions of pupil ability and educational effectiveness. Finally, there were no nonwhite pupils in the class studied at Brookville, one at Briar Hill, and about six (under 20 per cent) at Downtown.

Based in part on the observers' impressions it was anticipated that the inner-city school, Downtown, would be the most heterogeneous, but this expectation was not fully supported for the variables reported in Table One. Most striking, perhaps, is the homogeneity within the class studied at Briar Hill--apparently reflecting the school's grouping practices. The composite scores for the two sixth grades at Briar Hill give a better picture of the children it serves, but the particularly high-achieving, homogeneous class is the one to which reference is made in the remainder of this paper. There does seem to be a tendency for the two lower income schools to serve not only older sixth graders, but also a wider age range. Intelligence and achievement scores also seem to reflect somewhat greater variability at Downtown than at the other two schools. The apparent heterogeneity in occupational status at Briar Hill may be partly a function of differential discrimination at the high and low ends of the scale, but it seems also to suggest that suburbia may be less homogeneous than some have thought.[4]

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[3] While Downtown and Brookville Schools each had only one sixth grade class, there were two sixth grades at Briar Hill. The class available for study turned out to represent a generally higher achieving group than did the other sixth grade, although there was some overlap. In view of this difference, background characteristics such as test scores and parental occupation presented in Table One are computed for each sixth grade separately as well as for all sixth graders. Conclusions should be drawn separately for the total group of suburban sixth graders and for the apparently particularly gifted group that was studied. Unfortunately, essays and observational data were not available for the second sixth grade class at Briar Hill.

The atmosphere of each school is described below and illustrated with edited and sometimes condensed excerpts from the observers' field recordings. The excerpts were selected as much to convey the tone and feel of each school as to document the points that are made, and space does not permit specific documentation of every statement. Rather, the material is viewed as providing a basis for the selection of dimensions and the building of hypotheses for more systematic study. In the final section of the chapter, an attempt is made to draw the material together and to suggest some possible directions for subsequent work in the same area.

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[4] Parental occupations were scored according to the Socioeconomic Index developed by Otis Dudley Duncan and presented in Albert J. Reiss, Jr., Occupations and Social Status (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1961).

Downtown Elementary School

On the edge of the center-city business district, excavations mark the route of the unfinished section of an interstate highway through the city. Just beyond is an old neighborhood where large frame houses, many of them dull and dingy-looking, are packed closely together. The area seems to be a relatively stable, largely Italian, working-class section, with a few Negro families who may be newcomers from the nearby ghetto. The school--a large, dirty, overcrowded, old building--appears, in contrast to most of its surroundings, to be in good repair. Most of the pupils come to school on foot. They are usually greeted with little enthusiasm by teachers who seem to know what will happen today because it happened last week, last year, and the year before that. To the teacher, life is not very exciting--even boring, perhaps--but work is never fun and teaching does carry some prestige in addition to almost a living wage. These attitudes are reflected physically in the antiseptically clean hallways and the relatively messy and colorless classrooms. The atmosphere is gloomy, almost institutional, seemingly unchanging.

The observers seem to be a threat but inescapable, since they have the approval of the central administration. To resist them actively might make waves "upstairs"--probably better to live with them. Although the teachers seem concerned at first lest they be evaluated, perhaps a deeper worry is that such projects may eventually lead to change. In any case, the prevailing apathy soon overcomes anxiety, and the observers seem to be largely ignored.

A basic dichotomy appears quickly. The teacher establishes the "official" rules, and the youngsters respond. Many of the youngsters observe a conflicting set of unofficial rules, and the teacher perceives his response to these as one of his major functions. Hardly a cooperative venture, education in this classroom proceeds largely through teacher-pupil competition except at clearly contrasting "social" times. The pervading feeling is one of negativism and even belligerence, and not on the part of the youngsters alone.

Among the forty-one pupils (later thirty-five) in the class, three behavioral groupings seem to emerge. Some youngsters tend to be nonparticipants, apparently passively rejecting the situation by spending the school day slouching, looking out the window, and occasionally sleeping. The teacher usually ignores these children, as they do him and rarely calls on any of them. If they are asked to respond, they tend to do so poorly, if at all, but no one seems to mind.

> During a math lesson, the teacher called on one girl with the comment, "I haven't had you to the board in five years." He handed her a piece of chalk and indicated (in a friendly way) that she should put the next example on the board.... When she got to the front of the room, she returned to her desk to look at her book again. The teacher said, "Take a good look," but he stopped her when she attempted to bring her book with her to the board. She looked at the page again, and many of her classmates began to snicker. "Give her a chance," the teacher said, and he helped her put the problem on the board. She was not able to complete it, however, and another child was called to come up and finish.

Other youngsters are busily engaged in a variety of seemingly extraneous and often disruptive activities. One may be writing on his arm, some are playing with toys or their pens, a few communicating with one another in various ways, and so forth. The teacher feels he must control them and show them who is "in charge" by stopping the "bad" behavior, using open-ended or indefinite threats as his sanctions.

> During a social studies test, Mr. Howard read a question that the class apparently had not expected. They groaned and began to protest, but he replied, "Don't tell me you haven't heard of this before because I know that you have, and you'd better write an answer!"
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> The teacher said, "Go back and do the bulletin board. The first time you make a mistake and talk..." and he snapped his fingers.

This teacher feels that it is his duty to students to "adjust them socially," and the use of the active voice conveys the approach.

> The teacher chided the children about their demonstrated inability to wait their turn during the previous day's art lesson. He told them that they might as well learn to wait now because they would be spending a large percentage of their lives waiting -- in restaurants, theaters, and places like that.
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> Mr. Howard told the children to sit up straight, for if they continued to slouch, he would have to walk around the room and "sit them up straight."
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> While Mr. Howard was doing a math problem at the board, he noticed that some children were not paying attention "as if their lives depended on it." He told them that their lives may depend on math some day, especially the girls. He explained that the girls could not be housewives for the rest of their lives; "they work now-a-days, you know."

> The teacher told the class that the reason children quit school at 16 was because they were lazy and couldn't study. "They may give other excuses for dropping out, but laziness is the real reason behind it," he said. He also warned the children not to get into the habit of making excuses for themselves and blaming others for things they did.
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> Mr. Howard was talking about the draft and told the boys that the Army would not take them without a high school diploma. He explained that the Army wasn't going to "trust any numbskull" with weapons, trucks, or ammunition if he didn't have a high school education. "And," he continued, "if you can't serve your country, you get a very empty feeling inside."

When control attempts seem ineffective, the teacher ignores the same behavior; there is little else he can do to save face, an important consideration to him. Nor can he allow the youngsters to feel that they are flaunting his authority, since once youngsters like these get the upper hand . . . . Better to survive to fight them another day.

> After he walked down the aisles inspecting their papers, Mr. Howard asked if everyone was ready. Then he showed the children the exact position in which he wanted them to hold their papers on their desks. One girl raised her hand and said, "Mr. Howard, I can't keep my paper that way 'cause I can't write with this hand." "Why not?" he asked. "What's wrong with your hand?" She replied, "Nothing. I write with this (left) one." Peals of laughter filled the room as the teacher disregarded her and went on with the directions.
>
> Miss Stewart, the student teacher, asked the class, "Who would like to live in the Sahara Desert?" and Joe raised his hand. The regular teacher then interrupted to ask Joe, "Why?"

> Joe said nothing at first, but the teacher questioned him further, and the class began to laugh. He asserted that "This is not funny" and that he wanted to know why Joe would like to live there. Joe finally replied that he "Just likes the desert," at which the teacher dropped the issue. He walked over to the observer and commented quietly, "I thought I could pin him down, but I couldn't."

Meanwhile, there is a curriculum to be taught to those who will listen. A third group of children do "listen." They stay "with" the teacher, they race each other to get their hands in the air, and they respond vibrantly and efficiently to questions. The "official" rules are their rules; little justification is required in terms of the value, the relevance, or even the accuracy of what they are learning. In this context, they are motivated, competitive, and achievement-oriented; in many ways, they are not unlike the children at Briar Hill. But they seem a bit out of place and unsure of themselves, and they would be less likely to debate a point with their teacher. Six of these children were to be re-assigned around mid-year to a fifth grade class, which would then become a combined fifth and sixth grade. This was done because the school authorities felt that the atmosphere of the sixth grade class was too disruptive to their learning. For the most part, the teaching seems to be directed at them. The teacher sticks to the formal curriculum, however; there is little effort to expand horizons or the realm of inquiry. Rote learning is emphasized, and drill seems to be the method of choice. The higher achievers tend to be rewarded by the teacher but rejected by their peers.

> Mr. Howard gave out the spelling papers from the previous day and told the children to write the words that they had missed twenty times each. He told them not to complain and tell him that they didn't have time to do it because he knew that they did.
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> "Who doesn't know what democracy means?" asked Mr. Howard. One girl raised her hand, and he said, "Are you kidding?" "No," she replied. Mr. Howard became annoyed and told her to write the word one hundred times and then to recite it twenty-five times orally.
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> Jimmy was working by himself on a special project in the back of the room and, when the teacher stepped out for a few minutes, several children told him rather angrily to go back to his seat.

The three types of youngsters described (the apathetic nonparticipants, the disruptive nonparticipants, and the "go along" students) emerge clearly, as do the differential teacher responses. In addition, the range of ability levels represented in the class is noteworthy, but the underlying commonalities are of interest as well. The appearance and behavior of the youngsters suggest common stereotypes associated with low-income, urban youth. Despite the apparently wide range of intelligence, verbal skills tend to be low. Even the pupils who are successful by the teacher's standards often appear to be "serving time" rather than becoming academically oriented and involved. It is as if the three groups differentiated above have chosen three ways of surviving an irrelevant but compulsory experience. Some actively reject it, some essentially ignore it, and the "good pupils" knuckle under, learn the rules, and "play the game" without its seeming to have much meaning for them. Whichever their predominant mode of operation, most of the youngsters seem to have a strong capacity for survival in spite of, rather than facilitated by, their school experience.

This is not to say that the youngsters are passive in their classroom behavior. They are lively and colorful, far from placid or bland. They may compete fiercely to be called on to answer the teacher's questions, but many seem to care little whether their responses are correct or not. Perhaps the attention is more important to them, or the opportunity to affect (and sometimes disrupt) the class. Social factors such as these are apparently the motivators, with academic considerations usually in the background. When the teacher leaves the room, the children's spontaneity erupts as negativistic, rebellious misbehavior. When the teacher is present, the situation is rigidly structured and authoritarian; there is no doubt about who is in charge. But it seems apparent that the pupils have not learned how to function effectively without him.

> During the health lesson being taught by Miss Stewart, the regular teacher left the room for a few minutes. As soon as he was out the door, the boys began to kick one another and to throw spitballs and other paper objects around the room.
>
> The teacher took a small reading group to one corner of the room and told them that they could pick a story for their reading lesson. "I really shouldn't let you make the choice," he said, "but I will this once." There was a great deal of confusion about which to choose and, when the teacher finally suggested one, they promptly began to read it.

In a sense, some of the children recognize that they are largely dependent on external control.

> Miss Stewart was trying to conduct a lesson on letter writing while the regular teacher was out of the classroom. The class was very disorganized, there was a great deal of noise and extraneous movement, and only a few children were paying any attention to her. A boy and a girl were working by themselves on a new bulletin board, but the rest of the class was in a state of disturbance. Miss Stewart battled for about five minutes, trying to continue the lesson and to get her point across; the class was going its own way. After a while, she gave up and assigned written work to be collected in fifteen minutes. The class became quieter except for a series of disruptive incidents involving one or a few children at a time.... The regular teacher then walked into the room, and the class came to order almost instantly. One girl breathed what seemed to be a sigh of relief and said, "Oh, Mr. Howard, you're back."

The teacher is a disciplinarian first, a teacher second, and he perceives himself with pride as being among a small, informal fraternity of teachers who can work effectively with "this kind of child." He has his own approach, one not necessarily approved by educational "authorities." Since he feels that the majority of teachers cannot handle this type of teaching assignment, he enjoys a special subjective status even though teaching at Downtown carries low status in the school system as a whole. An assignment to Downtown is seen as a hard and honorable calling that requires the teacher always to be the boss. The youngsters cannot be permitted to get the upper hand, so the teacher must pose as omniscient, rarely acknowledging that he has been wrong about something or that he doesn't know.

> During a lesson on syllabication, a girl raised her hand to tell Mr. Howard that he had made a mistake in one of the words he had written on the board. Mr. Howard did not check to see if she was right (which she was) and dismissed the mistake by saying, "I'm sorry. That's the way English is. You can't argue with that." Soon afterward, he made the same mistake again. When he realized, he told the class that he had done it intentionally to see if anyone would catch his mistake.

Pupils are not expected to take much initiative and seem to do little work on their own; they accept the teacher's authority and seldom attempt to correct him. There are many "special rules" they must learn and observe concerning classroom behavior.

> Mr. Howard noticed one boy chewing without permission and ordered him to "swallow whatever is in your mouth, even if it is an eraser, and eat it." On another occasion, a boy asked Mr. Howard if he could chew gum that afternoon, Mr. Howard gave him permission, and the boy returned to his seat.
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> Mr. Howard surveyed the room and said, "Susan do you have studying to do?" Susan's reply was, "Yes." Mr. Howard said, "Yes, Mr. Howard," and the girl repeated, "Yes, Mr. Howard."
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> Some of the rules almost seem contrived to minimize the need and opportunity for pupil-teacher interaction and confrontation.
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> Many children had their hands raised after completing an English assignment. Those with one finger in the air were allowed to sharpen their pencils, those with three were permitted to go to the lavatory, while those with five were visited by Mr. Howard. (Two fingers is a request to get a library book from the back of the room.)

> One boy had three fingers raised in the air and Mr. Howard said, "No, Watson. You don't have to go to the bathroom." A few minutes later, however, Watson still had his hand raised, and Mr. Howard allowed him to leave the room. Mr. Howard commented to the observer that this boy had a bad habit of going once in the morning and once in the afternoon, but that he had to let him go this time because "his face was getting red."
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> When the last lesson of the morning ended, Mr. Howard told those on patrol to get their coats. A number of boys and girls got out of their seats and began walking toward the closet. Suddenly, Mr. Howard shouted, "Freeze," and everyone "froze" in the positions they were in at the time. Mr. Howard told them that no one should be be out of his seat unless he was going on patrol or talking to the student teacher. Then he called, "Unfreeze," and the children scattered toward the closet to get their coats or toward their seats.
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> As the children were putting away their math books, there was more noise in the room than usual. Mr. Howard called, "Freeze," and he chided that they did not know how to change from one subject to another. He said that the room should be as quiet then as if there were no movement at all and warned that they would "practice for twenty minutes tonight after school" until they were quiet. Then he allowed the class to "Unfreeze."

The teacher stresses that things should be done "his way" in school even if they are done differently elsewhere. Answers are expected to reflect what is taught this year in this classroom, whether or not it contradicts what was learned last year or the "outside world."

> Mr. Howard then wrote the number 3914 on the board and called on individual pupils to read it. One boy said, "Three thousand, nine hundred, and fourteen." Many of the children responded with excited "Oohs" and "Aahs," indicating that he had made a mistake.

> Mr. Howard called on two others who offered the same (apparently incorrect) answer. The fourth respondent said, "Three thousand, nine hundred, fourteen," the response desired. Then Mr. Howard had the entire class chant the number that way several times: "Three thousand, nine hundred, fourteen." He told them that when they inserted the word "and," he would put a decimal there and call them wrong.

Thus, truth and knowledge are not the goals. Success is to perceive the dichotomy between the classroom and the rest of the world and to respond as is appropriate and expected in each situation. Not only potentially constructive motivation and initiative, but also the development of personal integrity and identity may be retarded by these requirements and the overall teacher-centered atmosphere.

> During the project, the children responded anonymously in writing to several essay questions about their concept of the "ideal pupil." About two weeks later, it was decided that the papers should be identified to permit comparative analyses with aptitude and achievement scores, etc. Therefore, the children were asked to identify their papers, and they agreed. Several of the children were unable to do so, however, either by handwriting or by content. Two pupils selected the papers of other pupils as theirs. (In the two other sixth grades studied, the children were able to identify their papers quickly and accurately.)
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> When Mr. Johnson asked for the meaning of a word, several children called out the answer. He told them that he would not talk above them; there was room for only one talker in the room and that was he. He said that he loved to hear himself talk and that the children "hate" to hear themselves talk. "Isn't that right?" he asked. The children nodded in agreement, and the lesson continued.

The teacher's basically condescending approach must be reflected to the youngsters and seems prone to reinforce their alienation from school and the larger, adult society it supposedly represents, encouraging further suppression by the teacher in a continuing cycle. Despite his efforts at self-justification, it seems apparent that the teacher in such a situation must be "serving time" along with his pupils.

> Miss Stewart was having a particularly difficult time trying to control and teach the class. Mr. Howard turned to the observer and told her never to become a teacher.
>
> While the boys were at gym, a number of the girls came up to Mr. Howard's desk and gave him work that they had completed. He seemed rather disgusted as he commented to the observer that he had already made up the marks and the children were still handing in work.

It should not be inferred that this teacher is always remote and disinterested or that his pupils dislike him. He often plays the "showman," using a variety of gimmicks to arouse and stimulate the class when he wants to get a point across.

> While giving the test, the teacher read the questions slowly and with exaggerated precision, emphasizing key points, in an effort to keep the attention of the class.
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> The teacher tried mumbling to get the attention of the class. The children began to call out, "What? What did you say?" His mumbling gone, the teacher responded, "See, I could get your attention by speaking Greek, but when I speak English, you don't listen. Next time you listen when I speak English."

> The teacher called the children to attention by telling them to, "Look at me, because I'm the best looking person in the room."
>
> While reading about Ancient Egypt, the class encountered a date labeled, "B.C." "Quick," asked Mr. Howard, "tell me how many years ago that was." After a slight pause, he continued, "Well, what is the first thing you have to remember? Quick!" The class began to get excited. Someone said that negative numbers were needed, and Mr. Howard continued to fire rapid questions. Finally, a boy gave the answers sought, and the excitement dissipated.

The teacher is well liked and frequently, at relaxed times, he socializes and jokes with the children, although he attempts not to let the reins become too loose.

> One boy asked the teacher how long the social studies test would be. He replied, "Three or four hours, or maybe a few days."
>
> The class was discussing components of the Greek diet, and someone mentioned "kids." The teacher said, "Oh, that's good. Now I can get rid of some of you, kids." Several children called out to correct him. "No, no. Kid means goat!" In a disappointed tone, the teacher responded, "Oh. I was hoping I could get rid of you. I was saying 'Hooray' already!"
>
> During "chorus time," when half of the class was out of the room, the teacher began to hum rather loudly and deliberately, apparently very much aware of what he was doing. When the children began to laugh, the humming became even louder and more flowery. One boy called out that, "Someone better close the door." The teacher then walked to the front of the room and suddenly clapped his hands together. The children came to attention immediately, then relaxed when they realized that this, too, was part of the fun.

> A girl approached the teacher and asked him whether he would like to hear a joke. He was smiling, but she told him to be "very serious," and he immediately changed to a serious expression. She said, "Do you think Mickey Mouse could ever be a rat?" to which he did not respond at all. "That's the joke, you stupid nut!" she exclaimed. He said nothing more to her but turned to the observer soon after she had taken her seat, indicating that he "really shouldn't tease these kids" but that because of the relaxed classroom atmosphere now, it was all right. He also indicated that this type of interaction had to be controlled, particularly with the girls. The teacher then turned to the class and said that "talking time is over" and that they were supposed to study now.

The teacher's behavior seems to stimulate cooperation and enthusiasm but action still seems to be in the service of the "right answers." In large measure, the teacher operates as he pleases within the classroom, even when this is in conflict with officially approved practices. He is open about this with the children--perhaps using it in part as a device with which to enlist their loyalty--so they seem able to dissociate him from the "system" he supposedly represents and which they reject just as he does. To an extent, then, the children and their teacher are allies, united against a system whose nominal goals and methods they perceive as alien.

> The teacher told the children that the school would have an "open house" for parents instead of individual parent conferences as in the past. He said that he did not approve of this, that he had told this to the Board of Education, and that he liked talking with the parents. He went on to say that he might chat informally with parents during the open house and, "No one will ever know about it.

> During a discussion of the concept of infinity, one of the pupils referred to "way back before Christ was born, when the earth began." The teacher said that he did not want to discuss religion but that he would sneak it in now and then. "I'd rather not get reported," he said, "but I've been in trouble before, and it's all right to continue." He then indicated that theologians believe the world was created in 4004 B.C. "But if you believe in evolution," he continued, "you can just rip up your Bibles and not believe this date either."

Fundamentally, this teacher seems able to turn "teacher behavior" on and off at will, just as he expects his pupils to differentiate academia from the "real world" with minimal interaction between the two. It seems that he, too, is in this sense rejecting the concept and the substance of school. Perhaps he is helping to create the anti-intellectual, working-class, and socially disadvantaged adults of tomorrow.

Briar Hill Elementary School

One of the city's four high schools, located in the Briar Hill Section near the city limits, is reputed to serve primarily the intellectually elite; an overwhelming majority of its graduates go on to college. This school and its neighbor, Briar Hill Elementary, share a large, rolling site surrounded by modern, ranch-type homes with ample lawns. Both buildings are new and of similar light brick construction. Landscaped school grounds and playing fields enhance an already attractive setting. The halls and classrooms at Briar Hill are bright, clean, and excitingly adorned with children's work and information on current events and study units. The children greet their teachers and each other with an air of expectancy, and the teachers seem to know that they need to be "on their toes," at least in an intellectual sense. There seems to be an undercurrent of concern about the observers among the faculty, although some teachers quickly begin to converse with them almost as colleagues. Beyond social pleasantries and amenities, the children pay relatively little attention to them. The classroom atmosphere reflects the teacher's general informality.

> As one boy was presenting a report on the population of Argentina, Mr. Allen was returning homework papers to others in the class.
>
> The teacher sat at his desk eating candy as a boy gave a science report.
>
> The teacher came to the observer's seat and told her a joke during an oral report.

> While the children and the teacher were working quietly at their desks, a girl took a book she had received from her sister to the front of the room to show to the teacher. They discussed it for a few minutes, and he suggested others that she might be interested in reading. She then went back to her work and he to his.

The twenty-six pupils move around freely as they do their work, rarely disturbing their classmates. All seem concerned with both learning and grades and work seriously and competitively to achieve. Concern with college admission is already visible. Frequently, such pressures find overt expression in the classroom.

> At the conclusion of her report, one girl produced a large scroll of paper which she unwound with the help of two classmates to show various pictures of countries in Latin America. Mr. Allen seemed impressed and commented that he enjoyed her originality. At this, many boys and girls in the class called out with apparent distaste that she had done the same type of thing in the fifth grade.
>
> After a self-graded social studies test, the children were requested to call out their marks when their names were called. A few children refused to do this and walked up to the teacher's desk to show him their papers instead.
>
> After Mr. Allen graded a notebook and the pupil returned with it to his desk, classmates in the immediate area turned to ask him what grade he had received.

Despite this concern for achievement, the youngsters are usually good-natured and enthusiastic. They are attractively dressed, well groomed, and bright-looking, and many have a keen, although often sarcastic, sense of humor. Most tend to be highly verbal and relate almost as comfortably to adults as to each other.

> After giving his report, one boy told the class that he wanted to give another teacher in the school (whom he named) credit for its title, "The Economy of Argentina." He explained that he was about to title it "The Agriculture of Argentina," but that Mrs. S had suggested the word "economy" when he discussed his report with her.
>
> While discussing Chile, the teacher mentioned that their government had a naval station near Cape Horn. The children tried to determine why Chile needed a navy and suggested that they might look for lost Antarctic explorers or catch penguins. Someone made a joke about smoking Kools, and then they moved to a new topic.

Little "traditional" teaching occurs. The teacher serves more often as a group leader than as the "boss," and can and does admit when he has been wrong. He provides the class with a flexible framework for learning in a particular content area, but most of the actual learning is a joint effort involving pupils and teacher together.

> As the class proceeded from one person to another, each spelling a given word, hands would be raised to challenge the person responding and dispute the spelling. The teacher's responses were often challenged along with the rest.
>
> During a lesson on diagramming sentences, the teacher sent two boys to the board to illustrate the method. They did the first two sentences correctly but were unable to do the third. He told them that they were "Mixed up" and said, "Let's start at the beginning." Then they all went over the sentence step by step, analyzing and diagramming each part together.

Although the classroom structure is loose and learning tasks are often ambiguous, the youngsters can and do provide their own structure when the teacher does not. They take a great deal of initiative and responsibility and are largely self-directing, self-disciplined, and self-sufficient.

> As one boy began his oral report, a girl raised her hand and asked the teacher if they should take notes. He replied, "Well, make up your own minds and do whatever you think is best." Nearly all of the pupils took out their notebooks and began taking notes.
>
> During a library period, a few of the girls asked the teacher whether they would be required to write individual reports about Chile. He indicated that they would. They then wanted to know if there would be assigned topics. The teacher told them that topics would not be assigned and that if they found a topic they would like to research, they should consult him for approval.
>
> The teacher stepped out of the room for a few minutes while the children read silently from their texts. There was absolute quiet as they read and as each child finished the story, he began working on something else or walked to the class library to browse.
>
> The boys left for gym, and the girls immediately put their books away. One girl proceeded to the back of the room where the class library was located and began to call the rows, asking girls to bring back borrowed books. When this procedure was completed, she called the rows again asking those who would like to borrow books to do so. This period lasted one-half hour, during which the girls talked quietly and joked sporadically but were primarily engaged in reading their books. The teacher busied himself with his own work, apparently paying very little attention to the class proceedings.

The youngsters often become involved in and excited about their work to the point of disruption, the most frequent cause of interventions by the teacher. He is more apt to intervene with subtle or direct "reminders" or good-humored sarcasm than with direct threats or punishment, whether to control behavior or to stimulate improved academic performance.

> While textbooks were being collected, the children began to talk rather loudly to one another about their workbook answers. The teacher rang a bell at his desk and asked those who had questions to come up front and talk with him. The class quieted down quickly and about ten pupils came to him with questions.
>
> While checking one girl's science notebook, the teacher pointed out a number of spelling errors and told her that her book was of generally poor quality. He reminded her that she would not get a very good science mark if she did not improve.
>
> After Mr. Allen checked one boy's notebook, he told him that he would accept it if this was the best work the boy could do but he had a feeling that this was not the boy's best effort; the boy agreed that it was not. Mr. Allen then said that he would not accept anything less than the boy's best and that the boy should not accept less either.
>
> The teacher told the children that he would soon collect and grade their notebooks. One boy asked if he could re-copy his in order to get a better grade. Mr. Allen replied, "No. You did that in the fourth and fifth grades; this is graduate school, man!"

Frequently, members of the class use similar techniques to improve performance and to restore order themselves before the teacher does, apparently, in some cases, to court his favor. This is another manifestation of the importance with which school success is regarded by Briar Hill pupils. On occasion, there may be hurt feelings when the more sensitive youngsters find themselves the targets of virtually unconscious, hostile ridicule to which their teacher as well as their classmates may contribute. In most cases, however, the children do not seem to react overtly even to rather biting taunts.

> At one o'clock, pupils began drifting in from patrols or from lunch, and most worked quietly at their desks while some browsed in the library area at the rear of the room. One boy began to tell jokes, thus interrupting the quiet atmosphere, and others started to talk more loudly as well. The children soon became quiet again of their own accord. A few minutes later, when someone else raised his voice, a boy said, "You're not supposed to talk now." The class quieted down again, and work and whispering continued until the teacher returned at 1:15 P.M.
>
> The teacher chided a boy for writing too small, commenting that the boy wrote everything too small. Another youngster across the room called out, "Someone made him too small," referring to the latter's small stature. The class laughed.
>
> The teacher called two boys up to his desk and asked them if they were competing for last place in the class.
>
> Mr. Allen asked someone to volunteer to read a paragraph in the encyclopedia. When no one responded, he asked for his "pushcart peddler who sells fish." The boy he was referring to stepped forward and began to read in a loud, penetrating voice.
>
> As the class was preparing for an arithmetic lesson, one boy dropped several things underneath his desk. The teacher said, "Having a problem, Walker? Do you need to be changed or something?"
>
> A pupil mispronounced many Spanish words while delivering his report on the economy of Argentina. At one point, when he mispronounced

> Buenos Aires, the teacher repeated the mispronounciation and made fun of it. Soon after this, another Spanish noun was mispronounced, and a boy sitting in back of the room began to snicker.
>
> A girl made several mistakes while putting an arithmetic example on the blackboard, and the teacher's comments elicited laughter from her classmates. Finally, he took her hand and led her closer to the board, saying, "Let me take you where you can see it." The class laughed uproariously.

Much of the time, there is an active exchange of verbal humor and sarcasm between pupils and teacher; occasionally, the teacher seems to be beyond his depth.

> Before giving her report, a girl told the teacher that she could not find very much information about the clothing of Argentina. He said, "What? You mean they don't use too much clothing in Argentina?" The class burst out in laughter. Then she tried to explain that she could not find out very much about Argentinian food either. Mr. Allen replied, "Doesn't everyone eat hamburgers? There is so much meat down there, they must eat hamburgers."
>
> One of the exercises the children were to do involved using as many new vocabulary words as possible in sentences. One girl had a particularly ludicrous, though correct, sentence in which she had squeezed in as many words as she could. Apparently tongue-in-cheek, Mr. Allen told her that it was "very good" and that he could "hardly wait to hear another one." The girl began to giggle, but Mr. Allen became angry and abruptly told her to read.
>
> The teacher commented that George Washington Carver had thought up "thousands of uses for peanuts." One boy quipped, "Oh, then he worked for peanuts." Mr. Allen's unsmiling response was, "It is not even a nut, but a bean."

The youngsters also challenge their teacher on the content of what he teaches, and they capitulate, if at all, in the face of evidence that he is right. Rarely can they be brow-beaten into agreement, nor does the teacher try. These students are already concerned about grades for college entrance, but given a choice, most prefer to be right, particularly if they can show the teacher that he is wrong.

> While the teacher was criticizing the class for doing less well on a test than he had expected, Steve interrupted to say that he could prove right an answer that had been marked wrong. The teacher listened to Steve's explanation, then explained his own, different point of view. Steve then agreed that the answer his teacher had preferred was better than his own.
>
> In going over the social studies test, the teacher read question one and gave the answer he thought was correct. He then asked if there was any difference of opinion, and many people raised their hands to offer alternate suggestions. The teacher agreed that some of the other answers suggested might be just as correct as his and accepted them for credit.

Most Briar Hill youngsters, at least those in this particular class, have had a relatively wide range of "educational" advantages perhaps even more than their teacher, outside the school. They have the support of family traditions and peer standards which reinforce the value their teachers and the schools place on academic learning. Perhaps these students represent the "haves" in our society; they are in tune with it, and they are enjoying its rewards. Their school may not, however, be giving them a picture of the broader spectrum of the changing world of today, but rather an echo of the cultural encapsulation that they may experience at home as well.

Brookville Elementary School

A new interstate highway provides the most direct route from the city to the Brookville vicinity. The twenty-minute drive from the highway to Brookville itself winds through an area of small, hilly farms. Most of the houses that dot the countryside are small, old, and in varying states of obvious disrepair. The dilapidation becomes more frequent as one approaches town, where the new building that is Brookville School looks almost out of place. It is a small school, with but one class in each of the seven elementary grades, including kindergarten. The sixth grade teacher serves as principal ("head teacher") as well, and is supervised by a district principal who is responsible for several schools in the area. Many of the children arrive by bus from the surrounding countryside. No one is in much of a hurry, and the presence of observers appears to arouse more curiosity than anxiety. The teachers seem almost flattered, though hard put to understand why anyone interested in studying education would choose their school to observe. The overall atmosphere is reflected in the relaxed, nonrestrictive acceptance of the observers, although it sometimes seems that a teacher is making a special effort to impress the observer in the classroom.

> The teacher asked the children if they would like to change the class schedule for the day. She explained that they might very easily get into a rut, so they should talk about science this morning, since the observers were in the room.

> During an experiment, Mrs. Drake said to the class, "If you can't see, come over and gather in a circle." She then looked back at the observer and said, "Out of the way, please; make a clearing for the observer." The children then made a gap in the circle to give the observer a better view.
>
> The girls were giving their answers to homework questions in arithmetic. Each time one of the responses was wrong, the teacher looked at the observer and smiled.
>
> Don's seat is on the left side of the room, and it was necessary for him to pass the observer on his way to and from the closet where he picked up an object for the science display. The teacher was giving a class assignment as he did this but stopped to approach Don as he reached the science table. She leaned over to say something to him, and then he returned to his seat. After a few minutes, the teacher said, "Don, will you now go do what I spoke to you about?" Don left his seat, came closer to the observer, and said, "Excuse me for walking in front of you."

Most of the twenty-four youngsters in the sixth grade class at Brookville seem to be not only poor in the economic sense but also socially limited. They appear shabby and colorless, almost lifeless. Even the girls seem little concerned with their appearance. Many are overweight as well as unkempt, poorly groomed, and poorly dressed. In general, they are downtrodden-looking children, and their school behavior does little to dispel this impression. They are apathetic, docile, submissive, even self-deprecating. Negativism in any form seems not to be in their behavioral repertoire. They do what they are told, they seem to believe unquestioningly what they are taught, and they have but little interaction with their peers. There is little classroom "play"--no paper folding, passing of notes, making paper airplanes, drawing pictures on notebooks, or chuckling together about a playground incident after lunch. Nor does the school situation promote play opportunities, since many of the youngsters must leave on the bus soon after the school day ends.

Spontaneity seems to be lacking as well. The children rarely initiate contacts even with such frequent visitors as the observers, as sixth graders are wont to do. They know the observers' names but use them mainly in "Hello" situations in the hall or in prompting a teacher who has forgotten. There is no excitement, no enthusiasm, no "brilliance" to their relationships. Individuality is lacking, and the students hardly seem to differentiate themselves clearly from each other. They give the impression of being inferior, and that the world is beyond their ken, to be coped with only by listening to whatever they are told and keeping out of the way.

This pattern fits comfortably with the "homey" approach and needs of their teacher, who appears in many ways to be one of them. She often draws on her personal experience to illustrate concretely, somewhat dramatically, and on the children's level what she is trying to teach.

> While discussing the concept of fear, the teacher told of her childhood reputation as a tomboy. She added that she is now very frightened of some of the same things she did so easily as a child.

> Mrs. Drake asked the children if they had seen any old movies where a man used a long funnel in his ear to hear better. She described this horn-like device used by the deaf to funnel in more sound and talked about its use as a hearing aid. Then Mrs. Drake went on to imitate an old, New England-type farmer with his funnel in his ear, the characterization being complete with walk, regional accent, and "By cracky" interjections. The children seemed quite amused.

In general, the Brookville teachers do not seem particularly well educated in their profession and may be unaware that some of their methods are outdated at best. No one seems particularly defensive, nor is there much concern about the possibly more advanced and more effective educational practices in the city.

What interaction occurs in the classroom tends to be teacher-centered; group discussion appears to be unheard of. Communication flows from the teacher to the class or to an individual. Rote learning, memory, rules, and drill are emphasized, and results are tested primarily through questions-and-answers and oral recitation.

> The teacher called on a number of people to give the successive steps in problem solving but found that only one girl knew them. She scolded the class, saying that they had all copied the steps down but probably had never even looked at them. That was the reason, she said, that they had so much trouble with arithmetic.
>
> Mrs. Drake asked one of the girls to go to the board and write the first "thing" (step) of problem solving. The girl did this, writing "Read Carefully" on the board. Another girl was asked to write the second step, but she did not know it. Mrs. Drake said, "It just goes to show you," and indicated that the girl had a number of answers wrong because she did not know the rules.

Much of the time, the class responds on cue, in unison.

> The teacher was reviewing a list of nouns that the textbook had described as "things that cannot be seen." Discussing the word "idea," for example, she asked, "Can you see an idea?" The class responded, "No." "Can you feel an idea?" "No."
>
> Mrs. Drake asked the children how they could make sure that their arithmetic answers were right, and they all called out, "Check it."
>
> The teacher told the class how they could construct a diorama for display during the school's Open House for parents. She said it was a very good [illegible] to present their work and asked if they liked the idea. Everyone replied, "Yes." She then asked if they would like to break up into committees and again the children responded with a unanimous "Yes."
>
> Mrs. Drake wanted the class to tell her the last step in problem solving. She said they might as well learn it now because it was going to be required "over there," referring to the junior high school. She said, "Class?" and they answered, "Label."

The teacher's histrionics and the group responses of the class sometimes combine to create an atmosphere almost like that of a revival meeting.

> The teacher then went back to her desk, retrieved a National Geographic magazine, and said, "One of our new states, what?" The class responded in unison, "Alaska." She went on to tell the children that here were some pictures of the Alaskan earthquake. In a dramatic voice, she said, "That's what happened--the earth cracked right there and dropped to nothing. Houses, stores, everything tipped like this (illustrating with her hands that the earth had changed position), hanging. Then the water comes in like this," she continued, showing the children a flooded area that was illustrated in the magazine. She then said to the children, "Have you ever

> had a truck passing by that shook the school room like in our old school building?" The children responded in unison, "Yes." Then she said, "Does our earth's surface change?" And the children responded in unison, "Yes." The teacher then said, "It surely does."

That the children seem to "buy" this teacher's approach is illustrated by their apparently blind acceptance of what the teacher says as truth, at least for classroom purposes. Erroneous or misleading material is frequently presented and accepted.

> The teacher began a lesson on prehistoric man by explaining that these men lived on the earth "billions and billions of years ago."
>
> The teacher was asking the children to give causes for changes in the earth's surface while she listed them on the blackboard. She said that she would only accept distinctly different causes, but at the end of the session had included both "erosion" and "water carrying the soil away" on her list.
>
> Mrs. Drake told the youngsters that those with sixth grade readers were to begin the story of Pecos Bill. She asked the children if they knew anything about Pecos Bill stories, and one boy replied that the stories were nonfiction. Mrs. Drake agreed with this answer and asked for a definition of "nonfiction"; she finally accepted the answer that "not an ounce of it is true."
>
> After being told, "You use some words to describe what you name and some to join other words together" the class was asked to give an example of a word used to join other words together. One child suggested the word "grandmother," which the teacher apparently accepted, for she continued with the next part of the grammar lesson.
>
> The teacher asked, "What are the three essentials for man's life?" Someone answered, "food"; another, "clothing." A girl then raised her hand and said, "oxygen." The teacher seemed a bit surprised, but

> she dismissed the answer almost immediately by saying that they were "not discussing that now." After a while, the third desired response, "shelter," was given and accepted.
>
> Mrs. Drake asked the class what cave men looked like, and one boy responded that they were "hunched over." Asked to explain further, he said, "Sort of like apes." The teacher then explained that, while cave men were hunched over, "We certainly don't want to say that they came from apes." The discussion was then dropped.

Sometimes things that are obviously incorrect, seemingly even to the children, are accepted by them nonetheless--almost as if the teacher's role is to define what is fact and what is not. In part, "school" consists of learning the teacher's idiosyncracies and expected answers, and honoring them. It also includes learning incorrect information. The children seem to exert a great deal of effort in these directions, apparently in an attempt to please their teacher, and they rarely argue a point even if they think they are right.

Classroom discipline in the usual sense seems to be absent; it is as if no one would even think of "misbehaving." Pupils and teacher alike emphasize learning--even if the material communicated is false--and little else seems to happen at school. The overall submissive climate is further illustrated by the apparent absence of negativism among both pupils and teachers. Perhaps "resignation" or "fatalism" best describe the general attitude. At the same time, there seems to be a feeling of closeness between pupils and teacher which may have some elements of an "in-group" mutuality and which apparently reflects a general nurturance of and concern for the children. This may be related to the absence of visible negativism, but it may also render the children more vulnerable to the misinformation communicated by their teachers as well as to distorted and inadequate social stimulation.

Although the school climate seems tightly structured, the teaching process is poorly organized and tends to present assorted facts rather than coherent "units."

> The girls finished their paper correction about ten minutes before the boys were scheduled to return from the gym. The teacher started a new formal lesson which continued until the boys returned and was then dropped in the middle.
>
> Mrs. Drake asked the class to list various causes of changes in the earth's surface. One boy answered "lightning," and was asked to "explain his thinking." He responded by saying, "fire or rotting," and used the example of a tree falling and decaying, thereby changing the earth's surface. Mrs. Drake seemed to consider this answer wrong, and tried to give several concrete examples illustrating the difference between his response and a "correct" one. She then told him that a tree's rotting was not enough of a phenomenon to bring about a change in the earth's surface and that the process of decay took a long time. She went into a lengthy discussion of volcanic action, told an anecdote about a volcano erupting on a cornfield, drew pictures of cornstalks on the blackboard, and illustrated a statement about rock stratification. She then returned to the boy and asked, "Do you understand now?" The boy responded, "Yes."
>
> The teacher drew something on the board and told the class that it was a pie. "Pies have layers," she said, "and they also have a -- what?" Several children responded, "Crust."

> She went on to tell the class that the earth has topsoil with "the good stuff in it." Next, she described the process of digging a well near her house: "Over at our place, we have hardpan and, when they tried to dig a well, they ran into that stuff--what?" (no response) "...can't build--what?--what am I thinking of?--quicksand. They hit a cross vein where there was plenty of H_2O. They used one of those divining rods and, right where the pull was the greatest, they went through the layers to the water." She talked a little more about the layers of earth, then said, "Coal, what are you burning when you burn coal?" One of the children responded, "Wood." The teacher said, "Paper."

There is much apparently random and undirected activity, except when there are specific facts to be regurgitated. The structure that does exist provides a seemingly rigid, authoritarian environment.

> The teacher asked Linda to divide a square into fourths. When she completed this, her dividing lines were not exactly straight, so the teacher erased them and drew them herself. She then asked Linda what each part was called. Linda replied, "fourths," but the teacher said, "No, no. Each part." Linda seemed puzzled and could not respond. The teacher spent the next twenty minutes giving concrete examples (which Linda understood mathematically) before Linda "caught on" and could give the desired response, "one fourth."

Much of what is taught appears to be inappropriate to the needs, interests, and abilities of the youngsters.

Despite the teacher's enthusiasm, spontaneity, and apparent concern for the children, she seems to have neither the educational skills nor the sensitivity to stimulate them out of their general lethargy and to provide them with a fertile educational experience. Barring outside influence, Brookville School seems destined to continue on its present undefined course, with its most gifted graduates going on to college to qualify to teach in the Brookville Schools of the future.

Conclusions

Three classrooms have just been described. While they may not be typical or representative of anything beyond themselves, they may reflect more general practices in inner-city, suburban, and rural schools. In any case, it seems appropriate to examine the similarities and contrasts to see what they may be able to teach us. Many hypotheses emerge, and readers are encouraged to develop and examine their own. A few are presented here in an effort to draw the material together, to suggest some ways in which it may "make sense" as a whole, and to imply a few directions for subsequent, more systematic study.

It seems clear, first, that each of the classrooms can be and sometimes is a negative, perhaps damaging environment for children. In this context, it is important to emphasize that each of the three classroom teachers [illegible] is doing the best job he or she knows how to do. None of the teachers is attempting to hurt or short-change any child, and all are committed to their work. Their failures reflect particular personalities and value orientations and deficits of knowledge and skill rather than willfully negative or apathetic behavior.

This is at once both a most hopeful and a most discouraging conclusion. It is hopeful because we have seen teachers who care, teachers who want to give children something of themselves and something of value. It is discouraging because we have seen that the same teachers, restricted by their personal and professional limitations, frequently cannot do so. The inner-city teacher who openly resists authority, yet severely restricts autonomy in his own classroom, is, in effect, tutoring disadvantaged children how to be disadvantaged. The rural teacher, seemingly with a limited conception of the "outside world" herself, is able to do little to help her pupils realize new vistas and seems, instead, to be rewarding passivity. The suburban teacher seems to accept and reinforce the competitive, sometimes hostile values of his talented class, with little effort to introduce new perspectives. These seem to be three of our better teachers. It seems once more evident that grass roots educational change will not come easily even if we can agree on the directions it should take.

All three settings show structural and organizational similarities; all are readily recognizable as "school." The "system" in all three schools tends to demand behavioral conformity and academic achievement, although in different proportions. Still, marked differences among the schools appeared from the beginning of the study. Principals and teachers at both Downtown and Briar Hill were somewhat suspicious and defensive when the project was proposed. At Brookville, on the other hand, school personnel seemed almost näively flattered to learn that someone, particularly someone with the status of "researcher," wanted to observe them. The predominant pupil attitude at Downtown is one of opposition or negativism, at

Briar Hill, it is participation and achievement, and at Brookville, it is passive acceptance.

Briar Hill pupils both conform and learn, although it seems that less conformity is externally imposed on them than is expected at the other two schools. They "buy" the system which, in many ways, seems to be made for them. Brookville sixth graders conform even more but do not seem able to learn a great deal in the academic sphere. The youngsters at Downtown seem to reject the system itself: they learn poorly, if at all, what their teacher is attempting to teach, and they do not conform to his behavioral expectations. To attempt to teach them in a school context is to be constantly and actively concerned with control. It is not surprising to find the Briar Hill youngsters already worried about college, the Downtown class negative and resistive, and the Brookville children submissive and passive. What is surprising is the extent to which these stereotypes were reflected in reality at the three schools. It suggests that further study may demonstrate that the three schools are, after all, not atypical of the kinds of schools they represent.

The children's own descriptions of the "ideal student" reflect the same kinds of variation reported by the observers. Youngsters at Briar Hill frequently describe the ideal student favorably--he is seen as honest, friendly, and a hard worker, but within a normal range; they feel that he should not be "too good." A different twist appears frequently among the youngsters from Downtown. The ideal student is often characterized as one who "acts too big" or is stupid, creepy, or mean, in addition to being a hard worker. Apparently, anti-intellectualism runs deep and starts early among some of our people. Brookville provides yet another contrast--relatively colorless descriptions and apparently limited verbal facility. Brookville youngsters seemed to write less about classroom behavior and more of learning performance as determining the ideal student than do youngsters at either of the other schools. Their relative poverty of expression is apparent and provides another view of these students as relatively passive and colorless. Although the Downtown youngsters are also verbally limited, they are able to communicate their message loud and clear.

The form in which the responses are made also reflects what seem to be significant differences between the classes. For example, the responses of the Downtown pupils to all five questions average a total of sixty words, and the Brookville pupils average eighty-six. Briar Hill pupils, on the other hand, average 164 words in response to the five questions. Three per cent of the words used by Downtown and Brookville pupils consist of three syllables or more, but the total for Briar Hill is only 4 per cent, so the difference is slight. A count was also made of errors--spelling, punctuation, and grammar--and the percentage of errors to total words was computed. The figures are 18 per cent for Downtown--about one error per six words--14 per cent for Brookville, and 5 per cent for Briar Hill. Of course, these differences tend to parallel the intelligence and achievement scores reported earlier; nonetheless, they are real differences. Unfortunately, there was not enough overlap in intelligence or achievement scores to permit comparisons with those factors controlled, but an attempt to do so is planned for the future. The situation is further complicated by the ambiguity surrounding what an intelligence test measures in such disparate settings.

It is harder to draw conclusions based on the teachers "ideal pupil" descriptions, largely because only one teacher representing each of the three schools was involved. In addition, it was only after repeated requests that a response was obtained from the sixth grade teacher at Downtown School, and he claimed that he had already responded to the questions earlier. Wherever the slip-up occurred, the description finally obtained seems almost as perfunctory as those of his students. In the first question, for example, the three teachers were asked to "Describe the kind of behavior you would like your ideal students to display." Their responses, by school, follow; just as they appeared:

A. Downtown School:

1. Well manner (curteous)
2. Willing to accept the total environment of the classroom (rules, etc.)

B. Briar Hill School:

a. First and foremost, EMOTIONAL BALANCE.
b. A degree of SELF-ANALYSIS whereby he or she might have certain self-correcting abilities.

c. PROGRESSIVE PARTICIPATION that permits him to contribute without dominating, accept correction without withdrawing, admit inability without shame, or regret, and the sense to value the worth of some one else's contribution or analysis when it is worthwhile.
d. The ability to ANTICIPATE RESPONSIBILITY, listen carefully and carry out directions intelligently.
e. Cheerfulness and zest.
f. Charity.

C. Brookville School:

> I am one who believes that the ideal student should be friendly, but not overbearing, courteous, and willing to take helpful criticism.
>
> This student should have the want to learn more about any subject we may have in our daily schedule and not be content with the minimum of knowledge.
>
> Also, this student should be one whom I could feel free to trust at any time, any place.

While it would be rash to attempt to generalize on this basis, it seems apparent that the teachers are in tune with their pupils, as is suggested in the observers' reports as well. Still open to question--and an important question--is the source of the similarity. Do teachers tend to make children like themselves? Do children "seduce" their teachers to this extent to support and reinforce, unconsciously, their developing behavioral orientations? Do teachers gravitate toward schools with which their own personalities are in harmony? These possibilities and others, as well as their implications, will be subjected to further study.

Among the many contrasts among the three classes, only a few can be noted here. It is informative to consider class size--around forty at Downtown and under thirty at Briar Hill and Brookville. Presumably, the size of a class at Brookville is determined by happenstance--the number of children at a given grade level in the district. At Downtown, when it became apparent that the class provided an unwieldy learning environment, it was the high achievers who were removed and placed in a make-shift, combined fifth and sixth grade class. While this reflects the school's concern for the welfare of its better learners, it may also reflect the dominance of children whom the school is unable and/or unwilling to help. As is shown in Table 1, even school records are less complete at Downtown and at Brookville than at Briar Hill, perhaps additional evidence of a relative lack of concern for individual pupils and their needs.

The subject of evolution arose at both Downtown and Brookville Schools during the course of our limited observations. In each case, the teacher at least implied a rather strong distaste for the idea. Little, if any, interpretation is warranted, but neither should this interesting coincidence go unnoticed.

The chaos at Downtown School when the teacher leaves the room seems particularly significant, particularly when contrasted with Brookville (where pupils tend to do what they are told and may have little to say to one another anyway) and with Briar Hill (where internal controls are relatively strong and pupils seem to be too busy learning to get into much trouble). Accumulating evidence supports the notion that people who are trained to function with tight external control will become dependent on it for effective behavior, and the present work seems to point in the same direction.

It also points to a serious dilemma. The assertion is frequently made, particularly by inner-city educators, that disadvantaged children need tightly structured programs. Certainly we have seen that they cannot function well when the structuring force is gone. Taken alone, however, this approach tends to perpetuate the very dependence on external control that may be a major component of a possible "disadvantaged syndrome." Consequently, what is needed is not only structure but also a planned attempt to help youngsters learn to operate with less and less of it. Such findings as those of Hunt and Dopyera (1966) that there seem to be particularly wide developmental variations within lower class populations should also be considered in this context.

It is relevant, although not new, to point out that even the rebelliousness of these children may be an expression of their dependence on external attention and limits and of their lack of developing identity--as reflected in the inability of some of them to recognize their own handwriting and words. These tend to be low-status children and they know it, and they will be helped little to feel better about themselves or to achieve by continued suppression--although this may be the only way in which the school as now constituted can deal with them at all. Reference has already been made to what may be the teacher's techniques for minimizing or avoiding meaningful confrontation with his pupils.

The observations at Briar Hill, it should be remembered, turned out to involve an atypically high-achieving, high-status class, although the other sixth grade there also tended to be high achieving and of high status when compared with the other two schools. Despite the fact that the observers entered the situation "cold," not having seen any pupil records in advance, it quickly became evident that the class being observed was too "good" to be the whole story. Suburban children do have problems and suburban schools do have low achievers. In this case, as was subsequently learned, grouping was homogeneous--the "problems" were virtually all in the other class. Little else can be said about this here, except that the situation clearly points up the need for further study of suburban schools, the kinds of problems they face, and how they deal with them. It should also be noted that, despite the apparent acceptance of the hostile sarcasm so evident in the class observed at Briar Hill, it may be a source of pain to at least some of the children. This could be the message of their description of the "ideal pupil" as one who is "modest" and not "too good," "perfect," "haughty," "snobby," or "boastful."

The apparent absence of stimulation and excitement at Brookville is reflected in many ways, one of which may be that a sampling of the observers' notes showed them to be shorter and sparser than those from either of the other two schools. Perhaps less "happens" at Brookville; it certainly does not seem to be "where the action is." The children's passivity, authority-orientation, and lack of visible negativism in almost any form seem to render them more vulnerable to the adults in their lives. Apparently, these are adults who are often wrong to the extent of teaching incorrect information and who are ill-prepared to introduce them to horizons much beyond their own rural community. This is not to say that the teacher is a bad one. She is a nurturing and skillful teacher, but her own knowledge and experience seem limited; she can only give the children what she has. Nor is she particularly authoritarian--the situation seems to be an authoritarian one primarily because the children's passivity makes it so. Certainly this is a setting where more could be done, but it seems unlikely that many people who except "home-grown" products would, in the present situation, choose to teach there.

The implicit goals of the three schools represent, perhaps, the most overriding contrast of all, within which the other differences make a kind of sense. Downtown School seems to be largely a custodial institution, a place where poor children can, perhaps, be trained at least for social acceptability. Briar Hill, on the other hand, is more like a "prep school"--the orientation is toward bigger and better things in the future. Brookville School seems fairly clearly to be educating its pupils for life in Brookville. Perhaps these goals are not unrealistic, but some may believe that what seems realistic today is not enough. Whether, by plan or happenstance, the schools are moving in particular directions, and it seems more promising to see that movement occurs by plan.

Other questions arise, of course, and three seem particularly worthy of note here for future reference. First, the first grade classes in the same three schools proved much harder to differentiate, perhaps due in part to the more subtle and complex and more frequently nonverbal nature of the transactions. It seems likely, however, that first graders, being closer to infancy, tend to behave more instinctively and less on the basis of learned patterns. Therefore, perhaps, the first graders in the three schools appear more similar than do sixth graders. Likewise, teachers may treat them more like they treat babies, i.e., instinctively and, therefore, more similarly. The critical question, however, if this is true, concerns what happens to children between grade one and grade six to convert apparently similar learning environments and pupil responses to the vast differences observed on the sixth grade level.

Second, the observers reported many outside interruptions for special classes, notices, and other reasons throughout the school day. The impact of this on teaching continuity and effectiveness needs careful attention. Finally, more systematic study of the reciprocal impact of school environments and how they are perceived by their participants might shed new light on effective strategies for change.

It seems likely that the teachers observed would feel that they have been falsely portrayed if they read the observers' recordings of their classrooms. This suggests that such a technique might be of value in training and supervising classroom teachers, since they rarely have the benefit of such a mirror in which to examine their own behavior. Observations followed by group or one-to-one discussions should be explored as a means for enhancing teacher insight and effectiveness.

It bears repeating that this report may make the schools look worse--and in some ways, perhaps, better--than they really are, since the written word seems to carry particular impact. Our purpose is to identify the baseline--where we are--and the challenge. The settings observed may be idiosyncratic in some aspects, but there is certainly overlap in other areas. Therefore, a first task is to determine the extent to which they represent prototypes and to build more precise models of inner-city, suburban, and rural school environments. This can lead to new perspectives on the changes needed and ways to achieve them.